

BIBLE STUDY LESSON – CHRISTIAN LIVING

“THINGS CHRISTIANS SHOULD PURSUE”

PROVERBS 21:21 (NLT)

“Whoever pursues righteousness and unfailing love will find life, righteousness, and honor.”

I Timothy 6:11 (NKJV) “But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness”

Introduction: Everybody is pursuing something. It could be physical or spiritual. Some people pursue wealth, fame, fashion, or pleasure, while others pursue what is eternal. Everybody is pursuing something; the only difference is whether it is what matters or vanity. **Colossians 3:2-3 (NKJV)** says “**set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth, for you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.**”

The word “pursue” means

1. to continue doing an activity or trying to achieve something over a long period of time
2. to chase or follow someone or something, in order to catch them, etc.
3. to keep trying to persuade someone to have a relationship with you.

Notice what Jesus says in **Luke 12:29 (NKJV)** “**And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.**”

Look at **V.30 (NET)** “**For all the nations of the world pursue^[d] these things, and your Father knows that you need them.**”

In other words, we should not pursue what nonbelievers or world pursue because we belong to a different kingdom. **V.31 (NET)** says “**Instead, pursue his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.**”

Let us look at specific things the Bible says we should pursue:

1. Pursue the knowledge of the Lord.

The pursuit of the knowledge of God is transformative, leading to spiritual maturity and a deeper relationship with Him. **Hosea 4:6 (NKJV)** tells us “*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge....*” The knowledge of the Lord is vital. In **Hosea 6:6 (NKJV)** we are told two things God desires is Mercy and the knowledge of Him. “*For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*”

Look at **V.3a (NKJV)** says, “*Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD*”.

Notice Paul’s prayer for the Ephesian Christians in **Ephesians 1:17 (NKJV)** “*that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,*”

In **Colossians 1:10 (NKJV)** Paul prayed, among other things, that they might walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. Christians must grow or increase in their knowledge of God. This will happen as we pursue it.

Proverbs 2:1-5 (NKJV) says, “*My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*”

We must pursue the knowledge of God as we fellowship with Him in His Word, worship, and prayer, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

2. Pursue what is good.

I Thessalonians 5:15 (NKJV) says, “*See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.*”

Some people pursue those who have wronged them, seeking revenge. But the Bible says you shouldn't pursue your enemies; pursue what is good for yourself and others.

Proverbs 20:22 (NKJV) “*Do not say, ‘I will recompense evil’, wait for the LORD, and He will save you*”

(Proverbs 24:29) (NKJV) “*Don't pay people back for what they've done to you; don't seek revenge.*”

Romans 12:17 (NKJV) “*Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men*” Revenge is evil; don't pursue it. Instead, pursue good.

Matthew 5:43-44 (NKJV) “*You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,*”

This is how to pursue good, and this is the Spirit of Christ. Don't do evil to anyone because they have done the same to you. Pursue good.

Galatians 6:10 (NKJV) says “*Therefore, as we have the opportunity, we should do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*”

3. Pursue peace, righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.

These are some of the attributes of God that His children should cultivate. Pursue peace. Psalm 34:14 (NKJV) says “*to depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.*” The apostle Paul says in Romans 14:19 (NKJV) “*therefor, let us pursue the things that make for peace and by which one may edify another.*”

Similarly, Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV) says “*pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.*”

1 Timothy 6:11 (NKJV) says, “*But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*” What are these things to flee? Paul talks about them in the preceding verses. Flee the love of money and its evil consequences. Every child of God should pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness, not only those regarded as men of God; all Christians are ministers.

In II Timothy 2:22 (NKJV), Paul warned Timothy to flee also youthful lusts; but *pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.* The warning is also applicable to all believers. We should flee from everything that doesn’t portray us as Christians and pursue virtues and attributes that testify to our identity as true children of God.

We should pursue love. Romans 13:9-10 (NKJV) says “*all the commandments are summed up in the commandment “Love your neighbour as yourself”*” I Thessalonians 3:12 (NKJV) “*And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you*”

4. Pursue the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

In Philippians 3:12 (Darby’s Translation) Paul says, “*Not that I have already obtained [the prize], or am already perfected; but I pursue, if also I may get possession [of it], seeing that also I have been taken possession of by Christ [Jesus]*” Paul said in this scripture that he pursued. The word “pursue” is rendered “press on” in the New King James Version. Paul pressed on so that he could obtain the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

In Philippians 3:14 (Darby’s Translation), Paul says, “*I pursue, [looking] towards [the] goal, for the prize of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus*” The New King James Version renders the word “pursue” as “press toward.”

Ecclesiastes 1:3; 12:8 says vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Don't pursue vanities; don't pursue what the Word of God forbids. Don't pursue worldly things at the expense of eternal life. **Mark 8:36 (NKJV)** “*What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul.*”