

## 10 core Values for Successful Living - Matthew 6:1 – 7:27

1. Do the right thing for the right reason. Vs. 6:1-8; 16 – 18 God requires us to be Holy and do right just because it is the right thing to do not because others are watching. It makes no difference who is looking or not, we are to do the right. How often we just do what we think is right for the moment. We also do what we think will be right for the occasion.
2. Pray God's agenda, not yours. – vs. 6:9-13 Here we have the perfect example of how to pray so God can answer. We must first acknowledge that God is who He says He is. Then we begin to petition God for our needs, not wants. And then we confess our sins and thank Him for both forgiveness and provision. God will answer prayer if we pray in the right spirit and for the right motives and He will provide for all of our needs according to His ability, not ours. James 4:3
3. Relationships will make you or break you. – 6:14-15; 1 Cor 15:33; Mark 9:50; 1 Cor 7:15; 1 Thes 5:13; Heb 12:14 We talked about last week that failing to forgive someone who has offended you can and will make you bitter and end up controlling your life in ways you do not want. Here we continue to see that same thought expanded. You are often defined by who you know and with whom you spend time. Just think about those with whom you run and spend time. If you want to be good at something, you spend time learning from them. You spend time watching them and copying them. The same is true in life. Who do you want to be like? Who is your hero? Who is making an impact on your life today? Who is the one you are listening to most? They are the ones who will mold you and shape you. So who are you hanging around? Are they trying to help you or just use you?
4. Prioritize eternal things, not temporal things. – vs. 6:19-24 You can never go wrong by following God's priorities over the world's. God is only interested in your relationship to Him and not how much money you have or what kind of car you drive. He does not care what color clothes you wear, or the make-up you have on. All these things are just that, things. He DOES care about how these things affect your relationship with Him. Anything that gets in the way of loving Him and obeying Him, watch out, He can and will remove it. Most often it will be painful.
5. Don't sweat the small stuff. – vs. 6:25-31; 34 This is all about focus. What is the focus of our life? Why do we work, spend, and create wealth? What is our ultimate desire in life? If God will give the birds and the fish food to eat and clothes to wear, He will do the same for you. God promises us that He will meet our basic needs but that He wants

to give us our desires if we will bring our desires in line with His will. Ps. 37:4-5.

6. God's Kingdom is paramount, seek it first. – vs. 6:32-33 This is so simple and uncomplicated that we often miss it. God is saying here just this, "Put me first and everything else will fall into place." The problem is, "Do we trust Him enough to do that?" Sometimes we want to get into the middle of it and do things our way. Believe me, God will honor our putting Him first in our lives.
7. Judge yourself before you judge others. – vs. 7:1-6 This is a very miss understood passage of scripture and often miss quoted one. The bible does not say we should not ever judge, but that if we do judge, we can expect to be judged by the same standard. What it does not say here is that we should never use scripture as a standard to hold ourselves to and others to. We are commanded to be holy as God is holy and the only way to do that is to look at scripture and see how God commands us to do it.
8. If you need something – ask; if you have something – give. – vs. 7:7-12 The world is full of takers or givers. Here is the truth. Takers never have enough, givers always have more than enough. Many think that they are entitled to something because life has been less than fair or kind to them. No one owes you anything. Not even your parents. Each one God created has what it takes to survive in this world by depending on Him for their supply. Remember what we said about the small stuff? God will provide for you. So the more you give to others, the more God can give you so you can give to others. It is just how that works.
9. Stay true to your convictions; don't wonder from the narrow path. – vs, 7:13-20 This is separating the good from the bad. So many times we say, "Well it isn't that bad", or "just this once can't hurt me". Trust me, it can and it will. Do not trade tomorrow's blessings for today's desires. Remember Jacob and Esau? He traded God's blessings from his father for a bowl of stew. Just to feed his hunger. And it wasn't that he wasn't going to get some, he just wanted it right then. That is what we do as well. We all know that when we break our own rules, we suffer. We need to be committed to doing what is right just for right's sake.
10. Obedience to God is the only sure foundation for life. – vs. 7:21-27 this is the whole thing in a nut shell. Understand this and you will understand it all. No joke. This is it. Obedience is the only way to truly follow god and His will for our lives. Dr. Charles Stanley says, "Obey God and leave all the consequences to Him." It has never failed him nor will it fail you.