

Some Things That Christians Cannot Do

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Matthew 5:14

There are many things that Christians SHOULD NOT do. However, the Bible also says that there are some things that Christians CANNOT do. In this lesson, we will focus on the points mentioned by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

We Cannot Be Hidden (Matthew 5:14)

- We are the “light of the world” – light dispels darkness; one light can be seen from a great distance
- We sit as “a city set on a hill” – we will be noticed; often the first to come under attack
- We are called to be different (Romans 12:2) – Christian means Christ-like; we will not fit in with the world (John 15:18-21)
- Because we are different, people will notice our good works (Matthew 5:16) – or if we fail in this, they will notice our hypocrisy (1 Peter 2:12)
- We cannot hide – so live in such a way that people will notice the good in us

We Cannot Change Things Out of Our Control (Matthew 5:36; 6:27)

- We cannot “make one hair white or black” (Matthew 5:36) or “add a single hour to [our] life” (Matthew 6:27) – many things are simply out of our control; so what should we do?
- Watch what we say – do not make an oath (Matthew 5:33-37) because we simply cannot guarantee the promise; do not make plans without saying, “if the Lord wills” (James 4:13-16) because we could be forced to change plans
- Do not worry about tomorrow (Matthew 6:34) – God has promised to take care of us (Matthew 6:26, 30-33); we have enough to concern ourselves with today (earthly responsibilities, spiritual obligations)

We Cannot Serve Two Masters (Matthew 6:24)

- This verse is specifically talking about wealth – but the principle extends beyond that
- God is a “jealous God” (Exodus 20:5) – He expects/demands complete devotion/allegiance (cf. Galatians 1:10); yet some serve idols (1 John 5:21) of wealth, career, relationships, nation, etc.; others may divide their loyalties (1 Corinthians 1:12)
- We cannot serve two masters – we must be wholly devoted to the Lord (Matthew 22:37-38; cf. 10:37); we must obey God over men (Acts 5:29); count all things as loss for His sake (Philippians 3:7)

We Cannot Produce Different Fruit (Matthew 7:18)

- Good trees produce good fruit, bad trees produce bad fruit – they cannot do otherwise
- The context is referring to false prophets (Matthew 7:15-20) – if you start with good seed, it will yield good fruit (cf. Luke 8:11, 15); if you start with bad seed, it will bring forth bad fruit
- To produce Christians, we must preach the gospel (Romans 1:16)
- To produce growth among God's people, we must teach the word (Acts 20:32)
- We must have the right seed planted in our hearts (James 1:21) – follow the right standard (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Conclusion

- It would be nice if this list included “we cannot sin” or “we cannot be lost” – but that is not correct (Hebrews 3:12-13)
- We cannot be hidden – so show yourself to be an example to others
- We cannot change things out of our control – so do not worry; focus on serving God first
- We cannot serve two masters – so be completely devoted to serving the Lord
- We cannot produce different fruit – so obey God's word from the heart; teach others to do the same