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**A Christian Should .....**

**By Stanley T. Crawford**

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A Christian Should.....  
By Stanley T. Crawford

As Christians we should treat each other according to the guidelines established by God. God has defined guidelines for our behavior with our brothers and sisters in Christ. In addition, God has defined how we should treat the non-Christian. In some cases the guidelines are the same for our behavior towards the Christian and non-Christian. In other cases there are unique behaviors that we should display toward the Christian and the non-Christian. A look at Romans 12:9 - 21 sheds light on this issue. In this passage, Paul defines some of the desired behaviors for Christians in our interactions with Christians and non-Christians.

Paul begins by pointing out that the love that we demonstrate should be real (Romans 12:9). Paul proceeds to point out that our focus should be on the good and not evil. When people say terrible things about us we shouldn't do the same to them. We should instead bless them (Romans 12:14). Implementing this behavior is a challenge in some situations. At times, our emotional state toward our antagonist makes it difficult to bless and not curse. Yet, we must try to remember that God knows best even over our perceptions. (Proverbs 3:5 & 6)

Also, we should show compassion and empathy (Romans 12:15). We should apply this behavior with the Christian and non-Christian. Showing compassion or empathy does not mean that we are to adopt behaviors that aren't Christ like.

In addition, Paul tells us that we should live peaceably with all men, if possible, and when it is in our power to do so (Romans 12:18). There are times when it is indeed within our power to promote peace. For instance, when we are in a heated discussion our choice of words becomes very important. Our choice of words to convey our message can fall between the range of inflammatory to

conciliatory. The Bible provides food for thought in this area. Consider, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger (Proverbs 15:1)." So we should ask ourselves, "Are we trying to live peaceably?" There are times when the answer will be "yes" and times when the answer will be "no."

When others hurt us, we are exhorted not to take revenge. God has reserved revenge for himself (Romans 12:19). If you ever sit down and think about this, who can better render justice than an omnipotent being, God. God tells us that, if our enemy has a need that we can meet, then meet that need. In meeting our enemy's need we "heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:30). These are very powerful words; these words let us know that God will handle things in his time. We have merely to allow God to be God. From this, we can draw the conclusion that God cares for his children.

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## **How To Choose A Christian Counselor**

**By Dave Lloyd**

Christian therapy as a profession is relatively new, having been practiced only over the last few decades. While many in the Christian community adhere to a strict code of Bible-based, scriptural, prayer-focused means of helping individuals, additional methods have proven beneficial. The fear many have who are consider Christian counseling is that they would jeopardize their faith or somehow be disobedient to God or contradict the Bible. Yet through the wise choosing of a Christian therapist,

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one can find the help they need while still maintaining a Biblical basis for faith and incorporating Scripture and prayer into their personal growth process.

Christian counseling is best done by someone with an advanced (Master's) degree trained in the principles of psychotherapy and grounded in the essentials of Christian teaching. Through this combination, they will be able to discern behavioral or relational patterns that are both consistent with the Bible and lead to healthy spiritual and emotional growth. What many Christian counselors have come to believe over time is that emotional and spiritual growth are not mutually exclusive. In other words, one cannot be spiritual growing while emotionally bankrupt or relationally out of integrity. So while much of the time spent in the therapy room discussing your particular issue will focus on how to solve the primary issue you're facing, the ultimate goal of most Christian therapists is to lead you to a greater aware of tools you can develop to increase both your spiritual and emotional health.

In order to choose the right Christian therapy professional for you, it's best to focus on:

– their education and training – the role they believe therapy plays in the lives of their clients – the way they plan to integrate biblical and relational truths into therapy – their personal Statement of Faith or statement of a relationship with Christ – whether you feel a connection with them – how much you believe their expertise and personal character will help them in the practice of therapy

Choosing the right Christian counselor is an important consideration on your way to continued emotional and spiritual growth.

Dave Lloyd has created the online guide to Christian therapy and counseling at

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