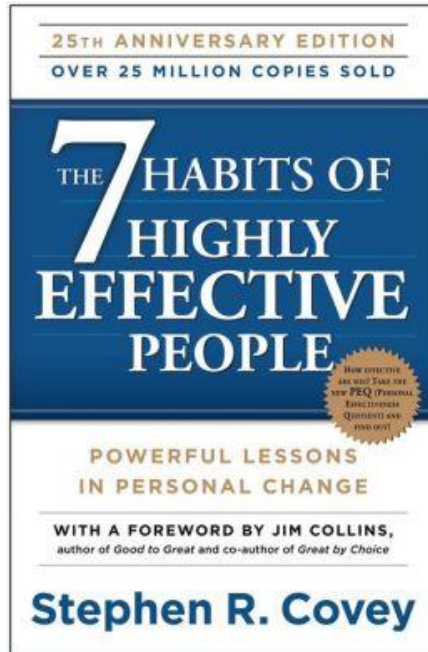


6 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE CHRISTIANS

The idea and approach for this lesson comes from Steven Covey's popular book, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People."



Mr. Covey's research found that highly effective and successful people who made an impact in their various fields shared a specific set of character traits and habits which he analyzed and summarized in seven categories.

I think we can make the same case for highly effective and successful Christians. There are characteristics and habits that mark those who are successful in their walk with Jesus.

As Christians, we all need to examine ourselves. It's important to have a clear standard to measure ourselves against as we serve the Lord in the various areas we've been gifted by the Spirit.

Know that all of you will have some of these habits developed to various degrees. Also realize that none of us will have all of these habits perfectly developed...but that should be our goal.

2 Key Words...

Habits - Actions that are engrained...that have become natural because of continued repetition. Things we do without thinking but accomplish with skill and precision.

Effective - This refers to the quality of our lives and our service. For Christians...it's producing fruit in our personal spiritual lives.

We don't simply get saved and then immediately become effective servants for Christ. It is through practice and discipline in the Holy Spirit that we develop habits that become a natural part of our everyday lives and enable us to become more effective as Christians. Today we're going to look at just some of the habits of highly effective Christians.

Habit #1 – Read and Obey God’s Word

Christians are highly effective when their lives are powered by the Word of God. They know what God says and that knowledge empowers them to make right choices in more consistent ways. They resist temptation because they have God's Word on their hearts and on their minds. They are more able to stand up for right, give right advice, say the right thing at the right time because they know what right is.

Psalm 119:11, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”

Psalm 119:105, “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”

2 Timothy 3:15, “How from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

You can’t be effective as a Christian in building your faith or sharing it with others if you don’t know and obey the Word. And you can’t know the Word if you don’t read the Word.

Habit #2 – Have an Active Prayer Life

God can’t effectively change, shape and mold our lives unless we share it with Him in prayer. Look at the example of Jesus. He prayed constantly and at every step of His ministry.

The habit of prayer is what keeps us tuned in to God and sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Without prayer the demands of the world and the desires of our flesh are all we can ever hear.

The effective Christian succeeds in growing in their faith because they stay in touch with God through prayer.

Habit #3 – Set Spiritual Goals

“If you don't plan for success, you are planning to fail.”

Effective Christianity requires that we set personal spiritual goals and actively work towards them, making the necessary sacrifices to eventually reach them.

Whether it’s reading more, praying more, giving more...we need to set realistic goals and come up with a strategy to achieve them with help from God through faith.

Habit #4 – Take Responsibility for Souls

Highly effective Christians take responsibility for their own souls and the souls of others...especially the lost. Christianity is not a game and faith is not a crutch for the weak. Effective Christians make a difference because they understand that the stakes are very high (eternal life) and the enemy is very dangerous (satan).

We are responsible for our own souls and in the end we will be judged on what we said and did as Christians.

2 Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”

Effective Christians know this and don't waste their time or spiritual energy on things that don't matter. They have the habit of putting what is good for souls first. This is why effective Christians are so interested in sharing the Gospel and are so good at it.

Habit #5 – Serve Others

Matthew 20:28, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve."

What saved us was His very effective service on the cross of Calvary. What continues the salvation He delivered once for all is the effective service of men and women who give themselves in service to reach new souls who are lost without Christ.

Effective Christians have developed the character of Christ's selfless service within themselves for the good of others, for their advantage and their salvation.

Christian service is not an inconvenience we bear in order to avoid guilt. No...service is a way of life born out of love for Jesus.

Habit #6 – Stay Focused on the Prize

Many Christians lose their way because they just don't pay attention. What destroys us are things that don't seem dangerous...worry, debt, health, family, busy-ness, emergencies, looking good, keeping up.

Effective Christians have learned to keep spiritual things first and don't allow the cares and distractions of this life overwhelm their spiritual lives.

Effective Christians know that His kingdom is forever, is reality, is life itself, and this world is temporary, is sinful and full of death. They know this and live accordingly.

So there you have them...6 habits of highly effective Christians. Believe it or not, there are Christians who've managed to develop a lifestyle that incorporates these habits...and so can YOU.

The key is having a desire to be an effective Christian and not someone just going through the motions.