

Title: What is Your Habit?

Text: I Timothy 4:7

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Place: DCOG

Theme: Good to Great

Grandpap was my grandfather on my mother's side. He took me to ball games, bought me ice cream, and took me to the Gridiron, the bar that was close to where we lived. My grandmother, before she became saved was a barmaid at the Gridiron.

Pap, as we called him, was a man of habits. He smoked "Camel" cigarettes and drank beer. I don't know if I ever saw him really drunk but I knew when he was drinking.

He developed asthma and emphysema. The doctors told him that he had to quit drinking or he would die. So he quit drinking. Then they told him that he had to quit smoking. He quit the cigarettes but then started smoking filter tipped cigars. He died.

Habits can kill us. Even those that start small. All of us know that one can of beer or one cup of wine will probably not kill us.

"Steve Bird, I bet you hear people try and tell you that all the time!" One step into some habits often lead us down the road of destruction.

When I was playing basketball for Gulf Coast Bible College, I had a kink in my shot. How I picked it up, I don't know but it took a lot of work to get rid of it.

Some of you who play golf, you know what I mean. The wrong habit can destroy your game.

Does it work that way in life? How about as a Christian? Can we practice good habits?

\*I brush my teeth regularly. Is that a good or bad habit?

I shower regularly. Is that a good or bad habit?  
 I try to make my bed each morning. Is that a good or bad habit?  
 I put my dollars in my wallet and they must all face the same direction. I can't have the presidents kissing each other. Okay, maybe it's a little OCD.

My point is that we can have good habits.

- Regularly reading our Bible.
- Spending time in prayer.
- Sharing our blessings with those less fortunate.
- Telling others about Jesus.

Our habits begin to define who we are.

**1 Tim. 4:7**

*Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.*

Godless myth: Drinking coffee will put hair on your chest.  
 Old wives' tale: The end of the ham must be cut off before it is put in the roaster pan.

One thing I can tell you is that drinking coffee doesn't put hair on your head. Just look around.

When asked about the ham... "That's what my mother always did."

When the mother was asked... "That's what my mother always did."

When the grandmother was asked... "Had to, the ham was too big for the pan."

Let's quit arguing over things that don't have real value. Train yourself to be godly.

What's your habit? Train yourself to be godly.

1. Joseph was a man of integrity.
2. Jonathan put friendship ahead of personal gain.
3. Ruth put family commitment ahead of her selfish dreams.
4. Hosea practiced forgiveness rather than justice.
5. Peter chose to do right, even if it meant jail and ultimate crucifixion.

What habits are you developing and teaching to others around you?

\*My dad had lots of failings, like all of us. But one of the good things he taught me was that there is value in coming together as the church.

He was a steel worker that worked rotating shifts at the mill. No matter what, the question wasn't, "Are we going to church today?" We were going.

If he worked midnights on the weekend, he got home got cleaned up and we went to Sunday morning church. Then he went home and slept in the afternoon. Then he got back up and we went to Sunday night church.

If he worked the evening shift, we went in the morning together and in the evening, he went to work and my mother took us the Sunday night church.

If he worked day shift, the family went in the morning and he took us back in the evening.

Unless he was at work, he made sure that we were there every Wednesday evening as well.

Call it what you will but I believe my Dad taught me a good habit. I walk with the Lord today and I'm sure part of it, Dad gets the credit.

We always had a car full of people when we went to church. We were taught to bring our friends with us.

One reason that my parents allowed me to have an old jalopy was that it gave us another car to fill up for church.

What kind of habits are you creating? What have you taught to others around you?

I joke around when it comes to golf. I'm not very good. Truthfully, however, I have believed that I didn't want to be so good that people wondered if I was about golf or pastoring.

Early in my ministry, I helped subsidize our income by selling life insurance on the side. That didn't last but a couple of years. When people began to wonder when I came by whether I was there to pray with them or sell them insurance, it was time to change my habit.

What's your habit?

I'm not a mind reader but I can usually tell what grabs your heart. One glance at how you spend your money and it becomes quite obvious what habit has control. Where do you spend your time? What is it that you truly enjoy?

### ***Hebrews 5:11-14***

*We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. [12] In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! [13] Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. [14] But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

God is looking for some men and women who have created good habits, or who want to create some good habits. Will you be one? Will you stand and say to this congregation, "I will be a person of value to God." I will practice good habits!