

*THE
RULE
OF*



*Prepared by:
PAUL E. CANTRELL*

2004

THE RULE OF THREE

12 Lessons

Prepared by:

**PAUL E. CANTRELL
84 Northview Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050**

pecantrell@juno.com

2004

Table of Contents

"The Rule of Three"

<i>LESSONS</i>	<i>TOPICS</i>	<i>PAGES</i>
1 – To Govern:	Temper, Tongue, & Thinking	1
2 – To Cultivate:	Courage, Love, Honesty	2
3 – To Commend:	Thrift, Industry, & Promptness	3
4 – To Despise:	Cruelty, Arrogance, & Ingratitude	4
5 – To Wish For:	Health, Contentment, Friends	5
6 – To Admire:	Dignity, Intellectual Power Used Well, & Gracefulness	6
7 – To Give:	Alms to the Needy, Comfort to the Sad, & Appreciation to the Worthy	7
8 – To Love:	God, Neighbor, & Self	8
9 – To Forsake:	Relations, Friends, & Self to Follow Christ	9
10—To Wisely Decide on:	Being a Christian, Marrying a Christian, and Get a Job That Allows Me to Live a Christian Life	10
11—To Respect:	Parents, Older People, and Those in Authority	11
12—To Live For:	God, Others, & Self Last	

Lesson One

“To Govern: Temper, Tongue, & Thinking”

For men or women to govern is a challenge—even when they are governing over others. But sometimes the ability to govern one’s self may be a greater challenge. To govern is to rule, manage, or exercise control over. There is no question that society would not long exist if there was not a lot of governing—especially governing over one’s self! The following questions will help to illustrate this concept.

TEMPER

- 1) How would you define Temper!
- 2) Who is better than the mighty? (Prov. 16:32)
- 3) What helps a man to be slow to anger? (Prov. 19:11)
- 4) To what is a man liken who does not rule his own spirit? (Prov. 25:28)
- 5) What about the man who is hasty in his words? (Prov. 29:20)

TONGUE

- 1) Who is wise? (Prov. 10:19)
- 2) What two things of seven does the Lord hate that deals with the tongue? (Prov. 6;16-19)
- 3) What are we exhorted to put from us? (Prov. 4:24)
- 4) Who preserves his life? (Prov. 13:3)
- 5) What does the tongue of the wise do? (Prov. 15:2)
- 6) What is a wholesome tongue compared unto? (Prov. 15:4)
- 7) What admonition does James give to Christians? (Jas. 1:26)

THINKING

- 1) What is said about the thoughts of the wicked? (Prov. 15:26)
- 2) What belongs to man? (Prov. 16:1)
- 3) What comes out of the heart? (Matt. 15:18-19)
- 4) What is the danger of looking? (Matt. 5:28)
- 5) How are we to use our mind? (Matt. 22:37; Phil. 2:5-8)

Lesson Two

“To Cultivate: Courage, Love, Honesty”

People who have a garden understand the value of cultivating (breaking up) the soil so that it will produce better. It is something at which you work—it does not happen by itself. To have godly characteristics in our lives like courage, love, and honesty, they do not happen by accident—they come from cultivation (working at the job). We trust that our study will be an encouragement to each of us to cultivate these wonderful characteristics.

COURAGE

- 1) Why was it necessary for God to encourage Joshua to be strong and courageous? (Josh. 1:6-7)
- 2) Why did Jesus tell the Apostles to be courageous? (John 16:33)
- 3) In what way did the Apostles show boldness? (Acts 5:28)
- 4) When are there times we will need to be courageous?
- 5) How would you identify a courageous person?

LOVE

- 1) What are the different kinds of Love?
- 2) What covers a multitude of sins and how? (Prov.10:12)
- 3) Who are we to Love? (Matt. 22:37-39; 5:44; Jn. 13:34; 2 Tim. 3:2)
- 4) Why is Love so important? (Rom. 13:8)
- 5) What about the Christian who does not love his brother in Christ? (1 Jn. 4:20)
- 6) How would you differentiate between kindly affection and brotherly love? (Rom. 12:10)

HONESTY

- 1) What is a good synonym for honesty?
- 2) What is an abomination to the Lord? (Prov. 8:1)
- 3) What is an abomination to the Lord? (Prov. 20:10)
- 4) Where will the Word of God find lodgment? (Lk. 8:15)
- 5) Is our honesty evident to others? (Gen. 30:33)

Lesson Three

“To Commend: Thrift, Industry, & Promptness”

At times, the Scriptures seem to be saying the opposite of each other! Usually, the context will help to clarify what is meant by the same expression, but from a different standpoint. We can illustrate with two passages that show this challenge to proper understanding. ***“Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”*** (Luke 6:26) ***“And they said, ‘Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews.....’*** (Acts 10:22). Why is there a woe pronounced in the one Scripture and a good connotation given to the same kind of expression in the other? One is saying that some flatter you and then turn on you and do you harm....they are insincere in their praise. The other passages is sincerely praising a man who was really trying to live right. The purpose of this lesson is to encourage us to be encouragers to others—but to be sure it is sincere.

THRIFT

- 1) What are some synonyms that help to further define Thrifty?
- 2) How did Jesus show frugality or thriftiness in John 6:12?
- 3) Why should we want to be thrifty? (Prov. 6:6-11)
- 4) How do you reconcile the teaching on thriftiness and the wastefulness of the woman whom Jesus praised? (Matt. 26:6-13).
- 5) Do you commend those who are thrifty?

INDUSTRY

- 1) Why do the righteous flourish? (Prov. 11:28)
- 2) Who illustrates industry? (Prov. 6:6-11)
- 3) What does the hand of the diligent do? (Prov. 10:4)
- 4) What happens to the lazy person? (Prov. 13:4)
- 5) What does idle chatter lead to? (Prov. 14:23)
- 6) To whom is a slothful person compared? (Prov. 18:9)
- 7) What will cast one into a deep sleep? (Prov. 19:15)
- 8) What about the man who excels in his work? (Prov. 22:26)
- 9) Do we commend those who are industrious?

PROMPTNESS

- 1) What does promptness indicate to others?
- 2) What does dilatoriness or tardiness indicate to others?
- 3) What must we not neglect? (Heb. 2:1-3)
- 4) When is the day of Salvation? (Heb. 3:7-8)
- 5) How are we to treat our time? (Eph. 5:16)
- 6) Do we commend those who are prompt?

Lesson Four

“To Despise: Cruelty, Arrogance, & Ingratitude”

To despise is to look down on, to degrade, or to scorn—possibly, even to hate! While Christians are taught not to hate one another (1 John 4:20); yet, we are to hate sin like God does (Psalm 97:10). David expressed it quite bluntly: **“I hate every false way.”** (Psalm 119:104). We are encouraged not to despise the person, but to despise his acts that are wrong—hating the false ways or acts. And...there are many, many things that the child of God should hate or despise because of the harm that it can bring upon so many people. Sinful practices bring consequences (Gal. 6:7-8)—we reap what we sow! We have chosen three basic things to illustrate what we are to hate for this lesson.

CRUELTY

- 1) What are some synonyms for cruelty?
- 2) Why should the Christian hate cruelty?
- 3) Why does the fool do what he does? (Prov. 12:15)
- 4) Who hates the righteous and why? (Prov. 29:10)
- 5) How would you explain the expression **“HE IS CRUEL AND INHUMAN?”**
- 6) Do you despise Cruelty on the part of humans towards others?

ARROGANCE

- 1) What are some synonyms for arrogance?
- 2) What comes with pride? (Prov. 11:2)
- 3) Who falls on his own wickedness? (Prov. 11:5)
- 4) Who is an abomination to the Lord? (Prov. 16:5)
- 5) What does come before destruction and a fall? (Prov. 16:18)
- 6) Who acts with arrogant pride? (Prov. 21:24)
- 7) What is said of the man who is wise in his own eyes? (Prov. 26:12)

INGRATITUDE

- 1) What are some synonyms for ingratitude?
- 2) Is ingratitude a sin? (2 Tim. 3:2)
- 3) Who would be a good example of ingratitude in the Bible?
- 4) Why should we be grateful? (Phil. 4:6)
- 5) Do we despise ingratitude in others?

Lesson Five

“To Wish For: Health, Contentment, Friends”

“I am that powerful genie in a jar that has been let loose and I grant you three wishes—what would you wish for?” We all know that this is fiction not reality! But still, we do wish for things that often lead us to work hard in order to obtain them. We do know for sure that just wishing for something doesn’t make it happen—it takes work and sometimes hard work in order to obtain what we wish we could have or possess. In this lesson, we want to look at three things that we should be very concerned about and desire to have in our lives. These are basic things. Many things even depend upon these three things!

HEALTH

- 1) If you had a choice between health or wealth, which would you choose?
- 2) What did the Apostle John want for those to whom he wrote? (3 John 2)
- 3) How concerned was the Apostle Paul for Timothy’s health? (1 Tim. 5:23)
- 4) What is more important than bodily exercise? (1 Tim. 4:8)
- 5) Is you wish for health just day-dreaming or are you serious about having good health?

CONTENTMENT

- 1) How would you define contentment?
- 2) What is better than great treasure with trouble? (Prov. 15:16)
- 3) What is better than a fatted calf with hatred? (Prov. 15:17)
- 4) What is better than vast revenues without justice? (Prov. 16:8)
- 5) What is said to be great gain? (1 Tim. 6:6)
- 6) How does one learn to be content? (Phil. 4:11)

FRIENDS

- 1) Who loves at all times? (Prov. 17:17)
- 2) Who will have friends? (Prov. 18:24)
- 3) What helps in making friends? (Prov. 22:11)
- 4) Who are we not to make friends with? (Prov. 22:24)
- 5) What is said of wounds of a friend? (Prov. 27:6)
- 6) How does Jesus say we show friendship? (John 15:12-15)
- 7) Are we really serious about wanting friends?

Lesson Six

***“To Admire: Dignity, Intellectual Power
Used Well, & Gracefulness”***

We all have our “heroes” or “examples” that we admire and often want to emulate. The thing that is puzzling is when youth picks the kind of “heroes” that is not good for them to follow. People should want to see and follow the good, not the bad. This is what this lesson is trying to help us see—be sure you look at the things that are worthwhile to admire and want to put into your life. These three things merely illustrate this concept.

DIGNITY

- 1) What are some synonyms for “dignity?”
- 2) What is more desirable than great riches? (Prov. 22:1)
- 3) What is necessary in order to love my neighbor (Matt. 22:39)
- 4) Who is a person you know that you consider dignified?
- 5) What will help to give us dignity in our lives? (Eccl. 12:13-14)

INTELLECTUAL POWER USED CORRECTLY

- 1) What 5 things does wisdom bring? (Prov. 4:5-9)
- 2) Who hates knowledge? (Prov. 1:22)
- 3) Who hates wisdom & instruction? (Prov. 1:7)
- 4) How does one buy the truth? (Prov. 23:23)
- 5) What can knowledge without love do to a person? (1 Cor. 8:1)

GRACEFULNESS

- 1) What are some synonyms for “gracefulness?”
- 2) To what is a love woman that lacks discretion compared? (Prov. 11:22)
- 3) How does a graceful woman treat her husband? (Prov. 31:11-12)
- 4) What does a husband & children say about a graceful wife or mother? (Prov. 31:28-29)
- 5) What makes a person graceful?

Lesson Seven

***“To Give: Alms to the Needy, Comfort to the Sad,
& Appreciation to the Worthy”***

Jesus said, ***“It is more blessed to give than to receive!”*** (Acts 20:35) The usual concept of giving is—you give, you lose! You have less money than you did before, or less time for yourself, or you have used your talents for someone else, not yourself. Have you ever taken the time to analyze just why it is more blessed to give than to receive? Also, giving can be done in more ways than with money. This lesson deals with three areas that are a challenge to both young and old.

ALMS TO THE NEEDY

- 1) What reward is held out to those who give to the needy? (Matt. 25:33-46)
- 2) What is one way to honor God? (Prov. 3:9-10)
- 3) What is said about the one who has pity on the poor? (Prov. 19:17)
- 4) Who considers the cause of the poor? (Prov. 29:7)
- 5) Will giving to the poor make them dependant upon you?

COMFORT TO THE SAD

- 1) How are we to treat the fainthearted? (1 Thess. 5:14)
- 2) What does sadness or sorrow bring? (Prov. 15:13)
- 3) Who can turn sorrow into joy? (John 16:20)
- 4) What is the difference between sorrow of this world and godly sorrow? (2 Cor. 7:10)
- 5) Who is able to comfort the sad & sorrowing? (2 Cor. 1:3-4)

APPRECIATION TO THE WORTHY

- 1) What is said about a word spoken in due season? (Prov. 15:23)
- 2) What makes the bones healthy? (Prov. 15:30)
- 3) What are pleasant words liken unto? (Prov. 16:24)
- 4) What is the lips of knowledge called? (Prov. 20:15)
- 5) To what is a word fitly spoken compared? (Prov. 25:11)
- 6) What is better than love carefully concealed? (Prov. 27:5)

Lesson Eight

“To Love God, Neighbor, & Self”

There is an important observation that the Bible makes about Love—it says that Love is the fulfilling of the Law! (Rom. 13:8-10) Thus, if a person loves as he should, he will do exactly what the Law of God teaches about how we should act. It is not Love versus keeping God’s Law, but Love that keeps God’s Law. Jesus said the two greatest commandments were to love God and our Neighbor. But, he added in connection with the 2nd greatest commandment that we love them as we love ourselves. So, there needs to be a love of self in order to effectively carry out the love for our Neighbor. Let’s look at these three more in detail in this lesson

LOVE GOD

- 1) Why is Love for God put first in importance? (Matt. 22:37-38)
- 2) Who loved first, God or man? (1 John 4:19)
- 3) How do we show our love for God? (John 14:15)
- 4) How do you define the kind of love we are to have towards God?
- 5) How did God show His love for us? (1 John 3:16)

LOVE OF NEIGHBOR

- 1) Why is love of our Neighbor put as the 2nd greatest command? (Matt. 22:39)
- 2) Is it possible for us to hate our brother in Christ, but still love God? (1 John 4:20-21)
- 3) How do we show that we love our brother? (1 John 3:16-18)
- 4) How do we show love to our enemies? (Matt. 5:43-48)
- 5) If we do not love, can we say we know God? (1 John 4:7-8)

LOVE OF SELF

- 1) What is a required basis for loving our Neighbor? (Matt. 22:39)
- 2) How is a husband to care for his wife? (Eph. 5:25-30)
- 3) What does love of self involve?
- 4) How do you differentiate between “self-righteousness” & “love of self?” (Luke 18:10-14)
- 5) Why is love of self so important to us?

Lesson Nine

***“To Forsake: Relations, Friends, & Self
to Follow Christ”***

One of the sad things of life is to be forsaken and left all alone! The Apostle Paul was left almost totally alone during his last imprisonment—only the Lord stood by him (2 Timothy 4:16-17). And even Jesus, our Lord, experienced the forsaking of His disciples at His trials (Matt. 26:56). But most of all, He was forsaken for a time by the Heavenly Father as he bore the sins of the world (Matt. 27:46). But Jesus has promised us that no matter what we have to face in this life that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). But He has also made it very clear that in order to follow Him we will have to do some forsaking! Let’s look at three areas that are mentioned in Scripture.

FORSAKING RELATIONS

- 1) Will it be necessary for some to have to forsake or be forsaken by relations when they become a Christian? (Matt. 19:29)
- 2) Why? (Matt. 16:24)
- 3) Who will have mercy from God? (Prov. 28:13)
- 4) For whom is harsh discipline designed? (Prov. 15:10)
- 5) What is the reward to those who have to forsake family? (Matt. 19:29)

FORSAKE FRIENDS

- 1) Who tends to try to corrupt Christians? (1 Cor. 15:33)
- 2) When do we have to forsake friends?
- 3) What should we do, if we have to forsake our friends to follow Christ? (Prov. 18:24)
- 4) With whom are we not to make friendship? (Prov. 22:24)
- 5) What warning is given about forsaking friends? (Prov. 27:10)

FORSAKE SELF

- 1) What requirement does Jesus plainly lay down that we must meet to be His disciple? (Matt. 16:24)
- 2) How does one hate his own life? (Luke 14:26)
- 3) What is said about the person who loves his life? (Matt. 16:25)
- 4) What are we to forsake in order to live? (Prov. 9:6)
- 5) What does the person do who forsakes the Law of God? (Prov. 28:4)

Lesson Ten

“To Wisely Decide on: Being A Christian, Marrying a Christian, and Get a Job That Allows Me to Live a Christian Life”

Decision-making is a great challenge. Most of us do not feel that we have made the best decisions in the past and even feel uncomfortable about making decisions for the future. But making decisions is a necessity of life! No one can escape such—no matter how long they put off making a decision about something. Jesus’ statement shows that if we do not decide for something, we automatically decide against such (Matthew 12:30). As young people mature and take on more responsibility for themselves, they are pushed into the decision-making process. If they have not been helped by parents and possibly others to make good decisions based on the facts and God’s Law, they will probably make some bad or even very bad decisions that could affect their lives forever. Let’s be aware that decision-making is a very important act that needs proper guidance from God. In this lesson, we hope you will be challenged by these three basic decisions for your life—and decide wisely.

DECIDE ON BEING A CHRISTIAN

- 1) When should one become a Christian? (Eccl. 12:1)
- 2) At what age may one become a Christian?
- 3) What does it mean to be a Christian? (Rom. 6:1-4)
- 4) What is the primary difference in a Christian and a person outside of Christ? (1 Jn. 2:29)
- 5) Does a person have to “obey the gospel” in order to go to Heaven? (2 Thess. 1:7-9)

DECIDE ON MARRYING A CHRISTIAN

- 1) Who should marry a Christian? (1 Cor. 7:39)
- 2) is it okay for a Christian and a non-Christian to be married? (1 Cor. 7:8-13)
- 3) What is the wisest choice to make in choosing a mate? (2 Cor. 6:14-18)
- 4) Is it possible for a person to pretend to become a Christian in order to get to marry a Christian?
- 5) Is marrying a Christian a guarantee for a successful marriage?

DECIDE ON A JOB THAT ALLOWS ME TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- 1) What about the person who does not work? (2 Thess. 3:10)
- 2) What is to be first before all else? (Matt. 6:33)
- 3) Why is this to be first?
- 4) Who is worse than an unbeliever? (1 Tim. 5:8)
- 5) When does a job interfere with a person living the Christian life?

Lesson Eleven

***“To Respect: Parents, Older People, and
Those in Authority”***

A lack of being respectful on the part of youth has been pointed out through the ages. The book of Proverbs is believed to have been written by inspiration of God some 3000 years ago! Many of the wise sayings contained in the book deal with the concept of respect for God, His Word, Parents, and those in authority. The Bible very clearly deals with all of these admonitions for us to be respectful people. Very basic to all of this is a proper respect shown to the Bible as the Word of God. Without this, the rest will be very shallow in nature. What a blessing it is to have young people who are very respectful—such shows good training in the home!

SHOW RESPECT TO PARENTS

- 1) Who is a grief to his mother? (Prov. 10:1)
- 2) What does a wise son do? (Prov. 13:1)
- 3) Whose lamp will be put out? (Prov. 20:20)
- 4) How do we show honor (respect) to our parents? (Eph. 6:1-3)
- 5) What is significant about this command? (Eph. 6:3)

SHOW RESPECT TO OLDER PEOPLE

- 1) Why honor older people? (1 Tim. 5:17)
- 2) Why submit to older persons? (1 Pet. 5:5)
- 3) How do we show honor or respect to older persons? (1 Tim. 5:1-4)
- 4) Why should we highly esteem them? (1 Thess. 5:13)
- 5) Whom does Peter say we are to honor? (1 Pet. 2:17)

SHOW RESPECT TO THOSE IN AUTHORITY?

- 1) To whom in particular should we be subject? (Tit. 3:1)
- 2) Why respect governmental authorities? (Rom. 13:1-7)
- 3) How much respect do we show to those who govern? (1 Pet. 2:13-14)
- 4) What special thing can we do to show our respect for such? (1 Tim. 2:1-2)
- 5) How respectful am I?

Lesson Twelve

“To Live For: God, Others, & Self Last”

To live on this earth is a privilege granted by God! He is the giver of life to all living things. But he has not only given us life on this earth, but is also offering to us life forever with Him after this life is over ((John 6:53-54; 14:6). But even in addition to that, he is offering to Christians the blessing of an abundant life here (John 10:10). Peter’s answer to Jesus’ question, ***“Do you also want to go away?”*** was so appropriate—***“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”*** (John 6:67-68). In order to have this abundant life and even eternal life, we must live for God, others, and self last. This lesson will show us the great challenge of discipleship to Jesus.

LIVE FOR GOD

- 1) In whom do we put our trust? (Proverbs 3:5)
- 2) Whose prayers does God hear? (Prov. 15:29)
- 3) What happens when a man’s ways please the Lord? (Prov. 16:7)
- 4) Who has hope for the future? (Prov. 23:17-18)
- 5) Who will prosper? (Prov. 28:25)
- 6) How do we live for God? (John 15:14)

LIVE FOR OTHERS

- 1) How does one “live for others?” (Matt. 22:39)
- 2) What does it mean to submit to one another? (Eph. 5:21)
- 3) How should we view others? (Phil. 2:3)
- 4) Where did the expression come from: *“God first, Others second, and Self last?”*
- 5) What is said about the person that lives for himself?

LIVE FOR SELF LAST

- 1) Is it wrong to look out for one’s self? (Phil. 2:4)
- 2) What warning do we need to heed in regards to self? (Phil. 2:3)
- 3) How is a husband to treat his wife in comparison to himself? (Eph. 5:25-29)
- 4) How is the wife to treat her husband in comparison to herself? (Eph. 5:22-24)
- 5) Why do we need to put God and others before ourselves?

