

Digests

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Priorities

¹ You have reason and conscience to govern your choices. ² These priorities are a guide to keep conscience within proper bounds. ³ They are listed by decreasing importance. ⁴ Try to observe all the priorities. ⁵ If two must conflict, prefer the more important one.

⁶ Compulsion may only be used to stop an immediate threat to life, property, or free will. ⁷ Choose what you will have at the expense of what you won't. ⁸ Give no importance to that which has none. ⁹ Tend to your own affairs.

¹² Make promises sparingly. ¹³ Keep your word. ¹⁴ Make amends. ¹⁷ Be grateful.

¹⁸ Take care of yourself. ¹⁹ Be sparing and cautious with behaviors that might be addictive.

²⁰ Respect others. ²¹ Speak kindly and quietly. ²² Maintain a few strong relationships. ²³ Maintain stable, long-term relationships with your spouses. ²⁴ Obtain consent from your spouses for all intimate relations. ²⁵ Have children with your spouses.

²⁶ Spend some time each day quiet and alone. ²⁷ Pray daily. ²⁸ Study the Digests and Messages daily, balancing literal and figurative interpretation.

²⁹ Avoid contention. ³⁰ Forgive wrongs, real and perceived. ³¹ Maintain political neutrality.

³² Acquire, then act on, useful knowledge. ³³ Engage skillfully in an occupation, trade, or craft. ³⁴ Make an honest profit.

³⁵ Incur debts rarely and sparingly, and pay them back quickly. ³⁶ Ten percent of your annual expenditures should be donations. ³⁷ Keep a modest reserve of useful assets.

³⁸ Smile. ³⁹ Serve anonymously, without remuneration.

⁴⁰ Maintain your body in strength, speed, flexibility, and balance. ⁴¹ Devote one day in seven to rejuvenation and spiritual growth.

⁴² Improve your surroundings.

Virtues

¹ Every virtue taken to extreme becomes vice. ² The virtues below are listed in pairs. ³ Balance the two virtues in a pair. ⁴ If you're unsure how to balance them, err on the side of the first.

⁵ The pairs are listed alphabetically, with no relative importance intended.

¹ Challenge, comfort. ¹ Companionship, solitude. ¹ Contentment, ambition. ¹ Detachment, attachment. ¹ Flexible, tenacious. ¹ Generous, frugal. ¹ Gradual, swift. ¹ Holistic, atomistic. ¹ Humble, confident. ¹ Independence, conformity. ¹ Intellect, emotion. ¹ Mercy, justice. ¹ Open, guarded. ¹ Prepare, improvise. ¹ Silence, communication. ¹ Simplicity, abundance. ¹ Solemnity, humor. ¹ Stable, dynamic. ¹ Tactful, honest. ¹ Tradition, innovation. ¹ Tranquility, excitement. ¹ Work, repose.

Prayer

¹ Offer formal prayer one, two, or three times during your waking hours, ² with at least one performed outside. ³ When praying outside, it can be helpful to turn your back towards the approximate location of the sun. ⁵ Make your best effort to perform each posture, even if it's not perfect.

⁶ Gratitude: Stand with your eyes closed and your face turned toward the sky until you are tranquil. ⁷ Recite, "God in heaven, I thank you for life, air to breathe, quiet places, and the ability to choose; ⁸ for challenges, work, emotion, and the gift of reason." ⁹ In your own words, express heartfelt gratitude to God.

¹⁰ Confession: Bow, eyes closed, hands on knees, face downward. ¹¹ Recite, "God in heaven, I strive to keep the Priorities, to balance the Virtues, and to learn from my failures when I don't. ¹² I want to be more faithful. ¹³ I fall short in these ways." ¹⁴ In your own words, confess to God your failures, weaknesses, and ways you need to improve.

¹⁵ Petition: Squat, arms outstretched, hands cupped to form a bowl, your face forward. ¹⁶ Recite, "God in heaven, you have given me a beautiful world to live in, messengers to teach me, and guidance when I ask. ¹⁷ Hear my prayer." ¹⁸ In your own words, request God's guidance in achieving your righteous desires.

¹⁹ Listen: Stand with your face downward. ²⁰ Recite, "God in heaven, you let the sun rise on good and evil people alike. ²¹ You send guidance through a gen-

tle thought, a quiet feeling, or a soft voice. ²² I'm listening." Listen for God's guidance.

²³ Action: Bow, eyes closed, hands on knees, face downward. ²⁴ Recite, "God in heaven, the greatest gift brings no profit when left unused. ²⁵ I thank you for giving me guidance. ²⁶ I plan to act." ²⁷ In your own words, tell God how you will act on the guidance you have received.

Maxims

^{2:1} A young child asks his mother, "How is a baby made?" ² Knowing the child's rudimentary understanding, she responds, ³ "The father places a seed in the mother's belly. The mother nourishes that seed and it grows into a baby."

^{2:4} So it is when God teaches us.

^{3:1} A king had two vaults filled with treasure, each protected by its own lock. ² The king said that whoever opened a vault could have the treasure inside. ³ Two men sought the treasure.

^{3:4} The first man turned the dials of the lock. ⁵ He listened carefully as the mechanism moved inside. ⁶ He noticed patterns of sound and vibration within the dials. ⁷ After many days of persistence and study, he discovered the combination and unlocked the vault.

^{3:8} The second man offered to be the king's servant. ⁹ He listened carefully to the king's wishes, and executed them faithfully. ¹⁰ He noticed patterns among the king's requests and anticipated his wishes.

¹¹ After many days of persistence and service, the second man asked the king for the combination and received it.

^{3:13} Both men received treasure. ¹⁴ So it is with knowledge.

^{4:1} There were two lakes. ² The first lake said to himself, "I will retain every drop of water that flows into me so that I can be great." ³ His waters became salty and putrid. ⁴ His fish died and the plants along his shore wilted. ⁵ Animals and travelers avoided him.

^{4:6} The second lake said to himself, "I want to prosper all life on the mountain below me. I will retain a modest pool for myself then allow each drop to pass down the river to those who might use it." ⁷ His waters became clean and sweet. ⁸ His fish grew large and the plants along his shore prospered. ⁹ Animals and travelers came from afar to enjoy his splendor.

^{4:10} So it is with all assets.

^{5:1} Rain, freshly fallen from a cloud, is clean and good to drink. ² As it flows down mountains and across plains, it becomes soiled and bitter. ³ The sun must extract pure water from the sea again, leaving impurities behind, to produce fresh rain once more.

^{5:4} So it is with messages from heaven.

^{6:1} A horse, a dolphin, and an eagle each consume their own kind of nourishment, ² and yet each grows to full stature and majesty.

^{6:3} So it is with spirituality.

^{7:1} A child asks his mother, "Please get me a cup from the top shelf." ² The moth-

er reaches the cup for him. ³ A grown man asks his mother, "Please get me a cup from the top shelf." ⁴ She responds, "You can reach it yourself."

^{7:5} So it is with prayer.

^{8:1} A man mixed one measure of sugar and the juice from one lemon into 2,000 measures of water, ² then served it to his guests as lemonade.

^{8:3} So it is with many religions.

^{9:1} A man brought eggs home from the market. ² Upon arriving, he announced, "I brought home one dozen eggs." ³ His wife said, "No you didn't. You brought home twelve individual eggs." ⁴ A son said, "You're both wrong. There are clearly three rows of four eggs each." ⁵ A daughter disagreed, "Not at all. There are actually four columns of three eggs each."

^{9:6} So it is with discussions about God's nature and methods.

^{10:1} A man decided to climb a mountain. ² He fixed his gaze permanently on the summit and began hiking. ³ He tripped over unseen rocks at his feet, ⁴ and was unable to reach the mountain top.

^{10:5} Another man chose to climb the same mountain. ⁶ He gazed permanently at his feet, to avoid the errors of the first man, and began hiking. ⁷ Without tripping once, he wandered off into a valley, ⁸ and was unable to reach the mountain top.

^{10:9} So it is when balancing virtues.

^{11:1} A man noticed a few small pieces of a jigsaw puzzle resting on a table. ² He wanted to assemble the new puzzle, but

there weren't enough pieces to complete the task. He also didn't know how the puzzle should look when it was finished.

^{11:3} From time to time a new piece would appear on the table, but there still weren't enough to guess the puzzle's final form. ⁴ One day, a sketch of the finished puzzle appeared next to the scattered pieces. ⁵ The man began to assemble what he had only to realize that some pieces were still missing. ⁶ He returned each day, sometimes to find a new piece, sometimes to find an old piece that had been accidentally bumped loose, and sometimes to find no changes at all. ⁷ In time, all the pieces arrived and he gathered the puzzle together into its beautiful, complete form.

^{11:8} So it is with personal revelation.

^{12:0} Various proverbs. I've indicated the original author when he's known and he's not me.

^{12:1} Say nothing about a man until you've said it to that man.

^{12:1} Don't do for others what they're unwilling to do for themselves.

^{12:1} Do unto others what they would do unto themselves.

^{12:1} You can't change the truth.

^{12:1} Don't use a floodlight when a flashlight will do. (L. Lionel Kendrick)

^{12:1} Friends walking together toward a goal will agree on everything that's important.

^{12:1} "When mores are sufficient, laws are unnecessary. When mores are insufficient, laws are unenforceable." (Émile Durkheim, perhaps).