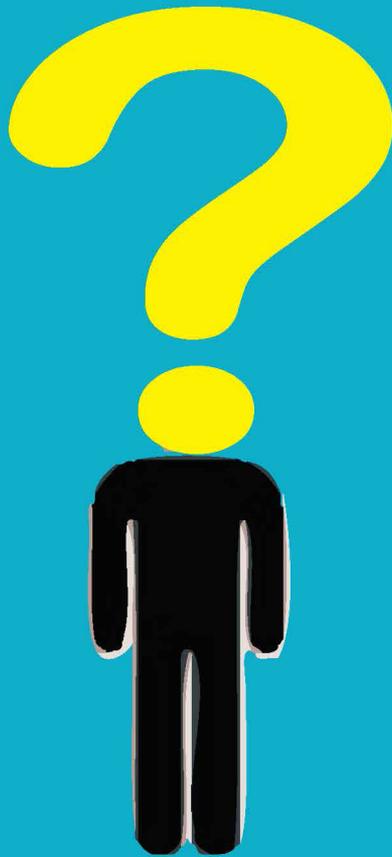


Living By The Rule

Simplifying My Life

With One Simple Rule



Michael Wayne Snider

LIVING BY THE RULE

**SIMPLIFYING MY LIFE
WITH ONE SIMPLE RULE**

Michael Wayne Snider

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SAMPLE PAGES

SAMPLE PAGES

DEDICATION

To Jonathan Snider:

The way you care about others is an inspiration.

To Justin Snider:

You always defend the helpless.

To Jalen Snider:

You always have hugs for me.

To Jennifer Snider:

Thank you for believing in me.

To Sean Snider:

You were a gift from God I never expected.

I was to teach you, but all of you have taught me.

SAMPLE PAGES

PREFACE

You will not read this preface. No one ever reads the preface. I know I never read them. I will open a book, skip over the pages, look at the pictures, and read what I feel to be important to me. I am done with the book way before I ever get to the introduction. I am sure I am not alone in this style of reading.

There is a possibility that I am wrong. You may accidentally read this. I was wrong about my high school teacher. He was famous for giving out long term papers. I would pour my heart and soul into them. No! Not really. I was more worried about meeting the word count than I was about the content of the paper.

One day he left the classroom to talk to another teacher in the hallway. I am not sure how it started, but we all begin to throw paper wads at each other. Our fun turned to horror when he stepped through the door and caught us all in the act. His punishment for our behavior was to give us a thousand-word term paper. I will never forget the title of the paper, “The Dangers of Flying Projectiles.”

I knew in my heart that he would never read the whole paper. So right in the middle of the paper I left a hidden message. I wrote, “If you read this sentence I will buy you a coke.” To my surprise when he handed back our papers mine had a note written on it. “You owe me a coke.”

I guess I should write an introduction. Someone out there may actually read it. Just in case, that someone is you. Here is my introduction. I hope I do not disappoint you.

Every New Year’s Day I take the time to think about my life. I think about where I am and where I am going. New Year’s Day 2006 was no different for me. I remember sitting in my favorite blue chair

with my Indianapolis Colts blanket wrapped around me. I thought about 2005 and how empty my life had been that year. Actually, 2004 had been just as empty.

I did not like where my life was or where it was going. My life had no direction, no meaning, and very little joy. I knew I needed some type of change. I needed to fix my life and now.

Later that day I went to my bed. I lay there for a few hours looking up at the ceiling. I had reached a dark place in my life where I had never been before and where I hoped I would never return to. I knew things were bad when I asked myself a very morbid question, "If I were to die today, how long would it take for anyone to discover I was missing from society?"

Then all of a sudden, a verse I had to repeat everyday in Bible college came into my head.

Proverbs 3:5, 6 "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

It had been years since I had thought about that verse. Why had God put it on my mind in my darkest hour?

Turned Away From God's Way?

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to to his own way." Isaiah 53:6

"They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them..." Exodus 32:8

“They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.” Judges 2:19

“... This people have transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice.” Judges 2:20

MY WAY IS RIGHT! RIGHT?

“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes...”

Proverbs 12:15

“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes...”

Proverbs 21:2

“There is a way that seemth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

Proverbs 14:12

SAMPLE PAGES

CONTENTS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
DEDICATION	5
PREFACE	7
CONTENTS	11
CHAPTER 1: My Ways Are Not God's Ways	17
Introduction	17
He Speaks, But I Do Not Listen	27
He Gives, But I Do Not Accept	29
He Leads, But I Do Not Follow	33
My Way Is Right! Right?	36
God Leads Me Through The Wilderness To Humble Me	37
God Leads Me Through The Wilderness To Test Me	38
God Leads Me Through The Wilderness To Protect Me	39
Conclusion: Going the Wrong Way On A One-Way Street	40
Teaching Outlines	45
Lesson 1	45
Lesson 2	50
The Pain And The Promise	51
Unconcerned About God's Way	52
My Way Is Safe! Right?	53
Chapter 2: My Ways Are Not Hidden From God!	55

Introduction	55
Playing In The Shadows	65
Sexual	67
Impurity	67
Greed	68
Shameless Obscenity	68
Foolish Words	68
Vulgar Jokes	68
The Vain Words of False Teachers	69
Keeping Company With Dark (Shady) People	69
Letting Evil Waste My Time	69
Not Knowing God's Will for My Life	69
Intoxication	70
Living In The Wastelands	70
Surrounded By The Graveyard	72
Conclusion: A Beam Of Light In The Darkness	77
Abide In God's Words	82
Use God's Words	82
Study God's Words	83
Obey God's Words	83
Meditate On God's Words	4
Enjoy God's Words	84
Trust in God's Words	85
Teaching Outlines	87
Lesson 1: Why My Ways Are Not Hidden From God	87
Lesson 2: Eight Reasons To Be Insecure About My Ways	89
Lesson 3: The Five Steps To Make My Ways Secure	92
The Law of Conservation	93

Chapter 3: I Must Decide To Walk God's Way!	97
Introduction	97
My Desire; My Struggle	100
The God Given Desire: Love and Sex	101
The Satanic Corruption: The Desire for Person	101
The God Given Desire: Rule	104
The Satanic Corruption: The Desire for Position	104
The God Given Desire: Pleasure	107
The Satanic Corruption: The Desire for Possessions	107
My Desires; My Weakness	110
Pleasure	110
Love	110
Rule	111
The Heart of Ecclesiastes	113
Foot Washer	116
The Lasting Memory of Jesus	117
The Lasting Example of Jesus	117
The Lasting Promise of Jesus	118
My Master; My Servant	118
God's Abundant Way	120
God's Abundant Satisfaction	120
God's Abundant Living	121
God's Abundant Joy	123
God's Abundant Provision	125
God's Abundant Power	127
God's Abundant Forgiveness	129
God's Abundant Grace	132
God's Abundant Mercy	133
Conclusion: God's Rule For My Life	136

Teaching Outlines	142
Lesson 1: The Prerequisite To Learn God's Way	142
Lesson 2: The Reward From Following God's Way	143
Playhouse Mirror	145
Living By The Rule	145
God's Simple Rule for My Life	146
Chapter 4: The God Of The Impossible, Not The Impossible God	147
Introduction	147
God's Simple Rule For My Life	151
Let Love Rule	153
Love God	153
I Am The Vine	155
Ye Are The Branches	155
He That Abideth In Me, And I In Him	156
The Same Bringeth Forth Much Fruit	156
For Without Me Ye Can Do Nothing	156
Love Others	158
How Do I Love Others?	158
Do I Love Others Who Are Not Worthy Of My Love	159
A Mountain Maker Or A Mountain Mover	161
1. Trust God With those That Have Hurt Me	163
2. Forgive those That Have Hurt Me	164
3. Help Those That Have Hurt Me	164
4. Remember this Is Not My Life	165
5. Remember Who the Real Enemy Is	165
The Attitude of The Rule	167
Poor In Spirit	167

A Mourner	168
Meek	168
Spiritual Appetite	169
Merciful	169
Pure In Heart	170
Peace Maker	170
Faithful	171
Thankful	171
Conclusion: Living By The Rule	172
Living by The Rule will Demonstrate Ten Qualities	173
Teaching Outlines	177
Lesson 1: the New Rule Is The Old Rule	177
Lesson 2: The Apostles Taught The Rule	178
Chapter 5: Conclusion	183
Index	189
About The Author	195

MY WAY IS RIGHT. RIGHT?

SAMPLE PAGES

CHAPTER 1

MY WAYS ARE NOT GOD'S WAYS

Introduction

When I was younger, I was a genius. I thought I could figure anything out. If, I had enough time to think, I had the answer to everything.

I remember the summer when my mother grew some beautiful flowers. She never had been able to grow anything. However, for some reason that one summer she grew flowers that everyone just loved. Late in the summer she began to complain to a friend about how she did not want winter to come because she did not want her flowers to die. My mother's friend told her to dig up her flowers and put them in flowerpot and then put them in the basement. Then her flowers would live until next summer and she could bring them outside again. So early in the fall my mother dug up her flowers. She put them into flowerpots and placed them in the basement of our house.

My mother told me that it was my job to water her flowers every week. I want to state here that I did water them every day. The fact that I obeyed her seems to get lost in this story. A few weeks later, my mother went down to the basement. Seconds later, I heard this awful scream. I immediately ran down the basement to find my mother in tears. She cries to me "Michael what happened to my flowers? My flowers are dead, Michael!

What happened to my flowers?" I told her that I did not know. Tears ran down her face as she asked me. "Did you water them like I told you to?" I said that I had. She could not understand what had happened to her flowers. She turned to me again and asked, "What happened to my flowers Michael? Are you sure you watered them?" I told her that I had. She began to shake her head in disbelief. She asked again "Are you sure you watered them like I asked?"

Now I was upset. I said, "Yes, I watered them every week just like you asked. I used hot water and everything." She said, "You used what!" I said, "I used hot water." In amazement she asked me why I had used hot water. I told her because the flowers were cold. The basement was cold so I thought the flowers were cold. Therefore, I figured that they needed some hot water to warm up. It seemed logical to me. However, I had killed my mother's flowers. Even though I had done my best to please my mother, my way had not been the right way.

One summer we went to the Jackson County fair. I played this game where you throw a ping-pong ball into a fish bowl. If you were lucky enough to land the ball into the bowl your prize was a goldfish. I was lucky enough to get a goldfish. Unfortunately, like all county fair goldfish my goldfish began to float to the top of the bowl. I was sad about the death of my goldfish. I was so sad because I could not say goodbye to him. Later that night I stayed up to watch a horror movie. The movie was Frankenstein. The story was about the doctor who wanted to create life. He put together a lot of body parts and had a man. I saw how he put the man on a table and hooked the body up to all kinds of wires.

He then pulled a lever and the table went up to a hole in the roof. An electrical storm hit a rod that caused electrical sparks to fly everywhere. The doctor then pulled the lever again and the table came

back down. Then the hand of the body began to move. The doctor yelled, "He's alive! He's alive!" The TV set had my full attention.

After the movie was over, I went to bed. There was my goldfish on my nightstand still floating at the top of his bowl. I was so sad that he was dead. I laid my head down on my pillow thinking about my poor goldfish. I also thought about the movie. I thought about my goldfish, and then about the movie. I did not sleep much that night because I thought about my dead goldfish, and then I thought about the movie. Then all of a sudden, I knew what I had to do.

That morning my cousin got out of his bed and left the room. I jumped out of my bed, and grabbed my goldfish out of his bowl. I ran to my desk, and I placed the goldfish on the desk. I took my lamp off my desk. I unplugged it out of the wall outlet. (Thank God, I did this.) I then pulled the wire out of the lamp. After separating the two wires, I plugged the wire back into the wall outlet. I placed the two uncovered wires onto my dead goldfish knowing I could electrocute my goldfish back to life. Imagine the look of surprise look on my cousin's face when he came back into the room to see me electrocuting my goldfish. It did not bring my goldfish back to life. I did not know why! I thought it through. I knew I was right. However, my way of thinking almost killed me.

One year we moved into a big white farmhouse in Carthage, Indiana. The house had three parts to it so there were three different roofs. I think what had happen was that every time they had a good year, they would add onto the house. Therefore, the house had three different levels of roofs. We did not live there long but I have many stories about that house. One story I will tell you now. The summer of 1972 was the beginning of my mind's true potential. I was a nine year old and my mind was working overtime. That summer is also when I

saw Peter Pan on the TV set. The most remarkable thing happened on that show. Peter Pan could fly. I wondered why I could not fly. I wanted to fly. When I went to bed that night I could not sleep; all I could think about was how Peter Pan could fly. I wanted to fly just like him. So I thought about my flying all night long. By the next morning I had a plan. I knew I could fly if I only had the right opportunity to put my plan into action.

Later that day my mother and father needed to go to town. Therefore, they packed up the car and began driving down the road. When I saw the cloud of dust their car made on the gravel road slowly fade away, I knew my opportunity had arrived. I ran up the stairs to my bedroom shutting my bedroom door behind me. Opening my bedroom window, I crawled onto the roof of the house. I had to twist my body sideways because there was a two-foot wide ledge and a two-story drop to the bottom. Therefore, I slowly shuffled my feet across that ledge until I came to the third roof of the house. I slowly crawled onto the roof.

The third roof had a big slope to it; therefore I had plenty of running room. I moved to the back of the third roof as far as I could. I had thought about this all night. Therefore I knew if I ran as fast as I could, down the third roof, flapping my arms and jumping off, I would fly.

There I stood waiting for my courage to come. I begin to flap my arms. When my courage came to me, I took off running and flapping my arms. My feet ran as fast as they could while my arms flapped as hard as they could. I came to the end of the roof. I jumped into the air flapping my arm with every intention of flying as far as I could. I went into the air then all of a sudden I went straight down. I hit the ground. Hard! It hurt!