

## My Ben Franklin

Thirteen virtues - important guides for living.

by **George Madiou**

1101 words | 5 pages

---



I spent a short time recently with my family in Philadelphia. I had a wonderful time exploring one of our greatest founding fathers, Benjamin Franklin. Ron Kurtus recently wrote about Benjamin Franklin's thirteen virtues, reprinted below.

When I was in Philadelphia, I was there because of my younger Ray. Ben Franklin was brilliant, clever and fun to be with. Our founding father reminded me of my brother Ray. Ray was also

brilliant, clever and fun to be with, a modern day Ben Franklin, quite a character! Ray was one of the most Godly people I ever knew. He affected many lives. On May 25, 2011 he lost a long fight and passed away. To the very end, he was an inspiration to everyone. Thank you for allowing me to share Ray with you. I'll see you some day my brother!

### **Benjamin Franklin's Thirteen Virtues**

by Ron Kurtus

Around 1730, while in his late 20s, American publisher and future statesman Benjamin Franklin listed thirteen virtues that he felt were important guides for living. Along with each virtue Franklin included a principle to follow that - in his opinion - would define a person of good character. The virtues can be divided into *personal* behavior and *social* character traits. Franklin tried to follow these guides in his life, although he often went astray. These thirteen virtues may be worthwhile to consider following in your own life.

Questions you may have are:

- What are the thirteen virtues?
- What did Franklin do with these virtues?
- Can you follow them?

This lesson will answer those questions. There is a [mini-quiz](#) near the end of the lesson.

## **Virtues**

We have divided Franklin's thirteen virtues and their principles into **personal** and **social** character traits.

### **Personal**

The eight personal virtues relate to your attitudes toward activities and their challenges. Good personal character traits will better your chances of success in achieving your goals.

**Temperance:** Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

**Order:** Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

**Resolution:** Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

**Frugality:** Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.

**Moderation:** Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

**Industry:** Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

**Cleanliness:** Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.

**Tranquility:** Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

### **Social**

These five social virtues that Franklin stated concern your attitudes toward people with whom you have dealings. Good social character traits result in other people wanting to do business with you or to have relationships with you.

**Silence:** Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

**Sincerity:** Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

**Justice:** Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

**Chastity:** Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

**Humility:** Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

## **Franklin's application**

Ben Franklin tried to live his life following these virtues, but he often failed.

### **Good intentions**

Franklin placed each one of the virtues on a separate page in a small book that he kept with him for most of his life. He would evaluate his performance with regard to each of them on a daily basis. He would also select one of the virtues to focus on for a full week.

Franklin also often emphasized these virtues in his *Poor Richard's Almanack*.

Later, in a letter to his son William, Franklin listed the virtues and recommended that William follow them too.

### **Reality**

Although Franklin tried to follow the virtues himself, he sometimes strayed from his good intentions. For example, in his *Almanack, Poor Richard* (Franklin) gave this advice:

*"Be temperate in wine, in eating, girls, and cloth, or the Gout will seize you and plague you both."*

Meanwhile, Franklin relished his food, womanized and sometimes dressed to impress people. His food and wine-drinking habits led him to be plagued with the gout for much of his life. But still, the positive intentions were there.

## **Following the guide**

The thirteen virtues are a good guide for you to follow. In fact, keeping track of how well you do in maintaining the virtues and having positive character traits, as Franklin did, is worth trying.

You also need to realize that no one is perfect. For example, these thirteen virtues imply that you must be extremely diligent and hardworking. But remember the saying in *Poor Richard's Almanack* that

"all work and no play make John a dull boy," so you can overdo things too.

The main idea is to follow the advice of Benjamin Franklin and try to be a person of good character.

## Summary

When in his late 20s, Benjamin Franklin listed thirteen virtues that he felt were an important guide for living. These virtues can be divided into those related to personal behavior (temperance, order, resolution, frugality, moderation, industry, cleanliness, and tranquility) and those related to social character traits (sincerity, justice, silence, chastity, and humility).

Although Franklin tried to follow these guides in his life, he often went astray. These virtues may be worthwhile to consider following in your own life.

Aim high!

*George Madiou*

Publisher and Co-founder

[www.TheNetworkMarketingMagazine.com](http://www.TheNetworkMarketingMagazine.com)

---



**George Madiou** is a full-blooded Entrepreneur, complete with validating credentials, Degrees in Marketing and Management from SUNY and NYU (could ya guess he's a native New Yorker!) To date George has owned over 30 businesses, and says they varied from wildly successful to

outrageous learning experiences. Among other successful ventures George has achieved high pin levels in two different network marketing companies.

George loves the thrill of teaming up with great people and seeing projects come to life and that passion is responsible for this magazine getting off the ground. George partnered with his good friend John Milton Fogg and here we all (and we includes you the reader) are, making history happen.

George lives in a small town named Boca Raton, Florida. He says "If this isn't Heaven, I know that God at least vacations here." Without question, the joy of his life is his family. He and Debbie are celebrating their 30th anniversary this year. They have two great young adult children, Sara and David.