

Name: _____

Date: _____

Christian Leadership

How to influence the ideas, opinions and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership (Day One) Real and Spiritual Fruit

A Christian leader relies on God's resources. He knows that his strength comes from God. He recognizes that when people are attracted to him, they are attracted to Christ. His ability to affect change or make a lasting difference in this world comes from God.

Now think about your favorite fruit. There are many kinds of fruit such as grapes, apples, blueberries, oranges, and bananas. Not only do they taste good but they are good for you. Fruit provides the body with necessary vitamins to keep it healthy and active. Fruit also has beautiful colors of purple, red, blue, orange, and yellow. No wonder we like to display bowls filled with such sweet and colorful delights.

Are you such a bowlful of good and colorful delights? Do you help others stay healthy and active in the Lord? Are others attracted to you for your encouraging yet truthful words? Do you have a sparkling appearance that comes from Jesus ruling in your heart?

Jesus tells us in John 15:5, *I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*

Let's take a look at the word fruit that Jesus' uses in John 15:5. He is using it in a figurative sense (used for vivid or dramatic effect). The literal sense (actual meaning) is that it is the edible and usually good tasting pulp around the seed(s) of many plants and trees.¹ It is through the fruit that seeds are protected and passed on to sow (spread, scatter, or plant) other fruit bearing plants and trees.

The fruit tastes good not only to man but to animals, fowls and insects. They eat of the fruit and carry the seed on or in their bodies to fall off or be excreted in other areas. The seed takes root in soil and new fruit producing vegetation springs up into the world. With additional fruit, more of God's creatures can be nourished and live.

1. Read John 15:5 again. Literally, only plants and trees bear fruit, so what does Jesus mean by saying that a person can bear fruit? _____

¹ Oxford American Dictionary

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The word fruit is used throughout the Bible in both its literal and figurative meanings. God created literal seed bearing fruit trees and plants (Genesis 1:11-12, 29). God also created figurative language to illustrate spiritual truths (Psalm 104:13).

Consider Jesus' parables and how He would use aspects of the physical world to illustrate spiritual truths. Jesus was doing the exact same thing His Father did (John 5:19). Jesus used figurative language to help his disciples understand the Kingdom of God and what was expected of them.

Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will fear you.¹¹ The LORD will grant you abundant prosperity-- in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground-- in the land he swore to your forefathers to give you.^{NIV} Deuteronomy 28:10-11

2. Read Deuteronomy 28:11-12. Who is ultimately responsible or in control of the literal fruit (crops) and the figurative fruit (descendants, rewards etc.)?_____

Right from the beginning God made it clear that fruitfulness of the land or from the womb (descendants) comes from Him. Jesus reiterated (repeated) this fact in John 15:5 when He said that apart from me you can do nothing. In order for you and me to produce fruit as illustrated in the New or Old Testament, we must obey Jesus and walk in His ways. However, before the walking comes the abiding, dwelling, and remaining in Him.

3. What does abiding in Christ mean to you?_____

Recall in Lesson One, *Building a Leadership Model*, that our goal is to become a leader like Christ. We want to follow in His steps and be a leader of excellence. However, as Andrew Murray tells us, "walking like Christ is the outward expression of the inner life."² We can't take steps like Jesus unless we are truly living in Christ. Commitment to Christian leadership takes deep and profound abiding in the King.

"Every believer is in Christ. But, everyone does not abide in Him in the consciously joyful and trustful surrender of their whole being given up to His influence. You know what abiding in Him is. It is to consent with our whole soul to His being our life, to depend on Him to inspire us in all that goes to make up life, and then to absolutely give up everything so that He may rule and work in us. It is resting in the full assurance that He does, each moment, work in us what we are to be. He Himself enables us to maintain that perfect surrender, in which He is free to do all His will."³

² Murray, Andrew. *Like Christ*, Whitaker House, PA, 1983. p. 10. (Andrew Murray, 1828-1917 was a South African writer, educator and pastor who authored 240 books)

³ Ibid, p.13

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Personal Application: Read and mediate on John 15. Answer the following question:

How are you abiding, dwelling or living in Christ?_____

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership (Day Two) Different Kinds of Fruit

There are various figurative meanings of fruit in the Bible. For our study, we are going to focus on four kinds of fruit. The fruit you will produce as a Christian leader can be categorized as *Character, Deeds, Converts and Praise Fruit*. In John 15:5, Jesus may have been referring to one or all of these categories. Nevertheless, all have been recorded in the Bible for us and we are going to take a closer look.

I. Character: Displaying Christian Character

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.
Galatians 5:22-26

1. Number and list the fruit of the Spirit._____

2. Would you like your friends to have these qualities? Yes No (Circle one) Why?

Sure we would like our friends to have these qualities. But more importantly, we must produce this kind of fruit or characteristics in our own lives. Fruit means result, product, outcome, consequence and even reward of effort or work.

Jesus Christ displayed the fruit of love, the fruit of joy, the fruit of peace, the fruit of patience, the fruit of kindness, the fruit of goodness, the fruit of faithfulness, the fruit of gentleness and the fruit of self-control. These are some of the characteristics that make up a Christian leader. Fruitful leadership begins with displaying Christ’s character. Remember, you can only consistently display what is actually in your heart and in your mind (Matthew 15:18-19).

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3. Out of the nine fruits of the Spirit which do you have the most trouble in displaying? Why?

How would you like us to pray for you in regard to the fruit of the Spirit? _____

Perhaps you are having difficulty with all of them. Don't fret. Remember the Christian walk is progressive. We are always moving forward and there is no time or room for guilt or condemnation in Christ (Romans 8:1-2, Hebrews 10:22). Put on your full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17) and let's move forward with godly character.

Fruit originates from Christ through the Holy Spirit. There are three simple steps to having the fruit of the Spirit or the fruit of character. **First** pray for such character, **second** follow the Spirit's guidance and **third** practice displaying these qualities daily *for the glory of God*.

4. Why is it necessary to mention that displaying your good character is for the glory of God?

Displaying good character is really the same as any other good work. There is always the danger that we will try and turn the attention on ourselves. "Look at how kind and good I am!" instead of "Look at how kind and good Jesus is!" Then there is the danger of works of the flesh. That is, you practice good character (work) to earn favor or to get something from God or others.

Therefore pray for your character to be pure and holy. Pray that you are always real and never a phony. Pray for the right motivation in serving God. *You can do everything through him who gives you strength.* ^{NIV} Philippians 4:13

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. ^{NIV} Proverbs 4:23
(Note: wellspring means source, fountain and origin)

5. How will you guard your heart? _____

Memorize:

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. ^{NIV} Colossians 3:23-24

Personal Application: *Pray, Follow and Practice*

The first fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22 is love. Today, you will take the three steps of developing the fruit of love in your life. Tomorrow and each day following take these three steps for each of the other 8 characteristics. There may also be other characteristics like truthfulness or integrity that you might want to develop in your life as a leader.

A. Pray for each Character Trait

Loving LORD,

I pray that You will reveal all Your love and character in me. I pray that I will yield myself to let it flow through me to others. Though with fear and trembling, yet in deep, grateful adoration, with joy and confidence, I thank You for what you are doing in my life. Here I am. Show me how much You love me and I will show it to others by loving them.

O Blessed One, that I may be able to do this, grant me these two things. Grant me, by Your Holy Spirit, a clear insight into Your love for me, that I may know how You love me, how Your love for me is Your delight and blessedness, how in that love You give Yourself so completely to me, that You are indeed mine to do for me all that I need. Grant this, Lord and I will know how to love and live for others, even as You love and live for me.

Please grant me to see, as often as I feel how little love I have, that it is not with the love of my little heart, but with Your great and magnificent love poured out in me, that I have to fulfill the command of loving like You. Am I not Your branch, O my Heavenly Vine? It is the fullness of Your life and love that flows through me in love and blessing to those around. It is Your Spirit that, at the same moment, reveals what You are to me, and strengthens me in peace and joy for what I am to be to others in Your name. Amen.⁴

B. Follow the Spirit's Guidance

Throughout the day, look for the Spirit's leading in loving God and others. As you see or come into contact with people, ask the Spirit what to say or do. "Holy Spirit, how can I love God and individuals this day? Lead me in situations that will bring glory to God and reveal His love to other people. Thank You! Amen."

C. Practice Displaying Love for the Glory of God

Character, like anything else we want to master takes practice. You must continually love to become a loving person. Our Creator designed us to learn and train to become skilled at our earthly activities. Therefore, you and I must perform loving acts to become proficient (skillful) at revealing God's love to others.

⁴ Ibid, p. 21-22.

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Who do you know or know of that is lonely, unpopular, or hurting? Choose to have lunch with that person this week. Ask them caring questions and listen intently to their answers. Be a friend. If having lunch is not feasible, think of another way that you can practice love,

Write and explain what happened when you practiced “displaying love” for the glory of God.

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership (Day Three) The Fruit of Right Action: part one

We are focusing on four kinds of fruit in a leader’s life. The first is *Character* which we discussed in Day Two. Now we are going to look at *Deeds*. A deed is simply something that we do or accomplish.

II. Deeds: Working Deeds in Righteousness

I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in vain.' I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right. Isaiah 45:19

1. What is God telling us in Isaiah 45:19? _____

God always speaks what is right and true. He does not ask people to seek Him and hide from them. God has made the world in such a way that we know He exists (Psalm 19, Romans 1:18-20). Not only does He speak what is right, but all that He does is right. God is righteous.

Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."^{NIV}
Revelation 15:4

2. Read Revelation 15:4. What is the adjective used in describing God’s acts? _____

3. Read Job 38-42 in your Bible. What are at least two things that these chapters tell you of

God’s righteousness? _____

God created and designed the world and all that is in it. All His acts are righteous. He has all knowledge and wisdom and all that He has created is good and right. In fact, all good things

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come from God. It is foolish for man to try and discredit God's justice or condemn God in order to justify himself. The world is ordered by our Creator and not man. He decides what is right.

4. How could you help someone who feels that life or circumstances are not right or fair?
(Job 38-42 & Isaiah 55:8-9)
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-
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God is sovereign and in control of all things. There is no denying that God has allowed the event or circumstance that has transpired in your life. God's perspective is eternal and He will work it out for your everlasting good by making you like Christ Jesus (Romans 8:28-29). There are many times when God works in ways that are beyond our understanding. For example, God created man with free will. By sinning Adam and Eve opened up the world to death, sickness and all kinds of evil. Perhaps you would have done things differently, however, that does not change the fact that God is the standard of righteousness and can do no wrong.

filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ-- to the glory and praise of God.^{NIV} Philippians 1:11

5. According to Philippians 1:11, what is the source of your righteousness? _____

Paul talks about the fruit of righteousness that comes from Jesus Christ in Philippians 1:11. Righteousness is first of all an attribute (characteristic or quality) of God. God never does wrong but always does what is right or correct. God sets the standard of right and wrong and is Himself the Standard of right and wrong. He is the ultimate Judge and is just in all His ways.

Some of God's attributes are for Him alone, such as His omnipresence (ability to be everywhere at one time). However many of God's attributes are communicable to us. That is, He can pass them on to us or share them with us. This is the case with righteousness.

The Greek noun δικαιοσύνη⁵ (righteousness) is used by Paul in the sense of what is right, what God requires. He requires us to have the fruit (product, outcome) of righteousness (Matthew 21:43). We are to be just and right wrongs. We have that ability because God put us in a right relationship with Himself through Christ. His law has been written on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-33, Hebrews 8:8-12).

Before I trusted Jesus as my Savior, a friend gave me a Bible. I started reading it and then in frustration I put it down. I thought and rightly so, nobody can be this good. I didn't even want

⁵ [UBS] δικαιοσύνη, ης f what God requires; what is right, righteousness, uprightness, justice; righting wrong; (God's) putting (man) in a right relationship (with Himself); religious duties or acts of charity (Mt 6.1). BibleWorks Version 6.

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to try. I put the Bible down and didn't pick it up again until after I was saved - 20 years later. Then I learned that it is the Spirit of God who enables me to do these righteous acts.

Even as a Christian Paul says in Romans 7:18, *I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.*

6. Do you ever get frustrated like Paul and wonder why you can not carry out the good works that you would like to do for God and others? Yes No Sometimes (Circle one) Explain.

Neither the unsaved nor the saved has the power in himself to overcome his sinful nature. This is an important concept for the Christian leader to grasp. Otherwise, not only will you live in a state of frustration and defeat, but you will be unable to help others overcome the immense obstacles and heartaches they face. Jesus died to put us in the right relationship with God and it is this right relationship with Him that is the source of our victory, peace and joy.

For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."^{NIV} Romans 1:17

7. According to Romans 1:17, how do you know that you are righteous? _____

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.³ For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,⁴ in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.^{NIV} Romans 8:1-4

8. Read Romans 8:1-4. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

because _____

9. How did God condemn sin in sinful man? _____

10. Why did God condemn sin in sinful man? _____

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Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-- not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-- continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. ^{NIV} Philippians 2:12-13

11. Read Philippians 2:13. Who gives us the power to do good deeds or act right? _____

God works in us to be effective in carrying out His will and perfect plan for our lives.⁶ His plan calls for good deeds. Be careful, this verse does not mean that we have no responsibility for what we do. It means that He enables us to accomplish righteous acts. Therefore we should never take credit for our good deeds but always give God the honor that He deserves.

Personal Application: Worship God for his deeds and his righteous ways.

and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages.

^{NIV} Revelation 15:3

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership (Day Four) The Fruit of Right Action: part two

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-- not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-- continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. ^{NIV} Philippians 2:12-13

1. In verse 12, why does Paul say *to work out your salvation with fear and trembling*? (Read Luke 3:8-14, 1 Corinthians 2:3, 9: 24-27, 2 Corinthians 7:15, Hebrews 9:6-12)

Paul is saying that if you are saved, you should be laboring for God and His Kingdom. Christ, our Leader set the example for how we should labor in producing good fruit. He gave God the Father total reverence and awe. He was not arrogant or self serving. He took nothing for granted but always looked to see what God desired of Him. Although His major and primary work was at the cross, He lived a purposeful life performing righteous acts wherever He went.

2. What would you tell someone who is discouraged in his ability to produce fruit?

God is in charge of our good works. The believer should ask God each day for his or her assignments. Perhaps this Christian is expecting something different from his or her life than God has planned. There is also the possibility that there is unconfessed sin in his or her life that God would like addressed. Delicate and specific questions may root out some problems.

⁶ Ibid. ἐνεργέω (generally of supernatural activity) intrans. work, be at work, be operative; be effective (πολλὰ ἰσχύει ἐ. has powerful effects Jas 5.16); trans. effect, accomplish

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If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ *If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense-- Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.* ^{NIV} 1 John 1:9-2:1

3. According to 1 John 1:9-2:1, as a believer can you still do wrong? Yes No (Circle One)

4. What do you do when you sin? _____

Sanctification is a word used to describe our growth or maturity in likeness to Jesus Christ. That is, we continually move forward in developing holiness. We sin less and serve more effectively. We produce more and better fruit. It is a process that will continue all the days of our lives.

We cannot sanctify ourselves. Holiness and fruit begin with God. We must depend on Him. Nothing we do apart from Jesus has any merit or value.

However this does not mean that our role is only a passive one waiting for God to do all the work. Throughout the Bible, we are told and commanded to do many things. God does not want us to be lazy but to be strong warriors, fit for battle.

First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. ^{NIV} Acts 26:20

5. Paul tells us in Acts 26:20 that he preached to Jews and Gentiles alike that after they had repented that they should prove their _____ by their _____

Paul was saying, look if you believe that Jesus died for your sins and you have indeed turned from sin, then demonstrate it, verify it by what you do. Your deeds should testify that you are a Christ follower. Paul felt it was so important to the Christian life that he repeatedly taught people about proving their repentance by their deeds.

Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ^{NIV} Matthew 3:8 (Look in your Bible for the answers)

6. Who is speaking in Matthew 3:8? _____

7. What was he suppose to do while on earth? _____

8. What do you think God is calling you to do? _____

9. How can you help others answer God's call for good deeds? _____

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God has things for us to do while we are on this earth. It may be as simple as holding a door open for someone to go through or giving money to someone in need. The size of the work, deed or task is not what is important. The importance lies in your willingness to honor God in your actions. The value lies in your faithfulness.

Personal Application:

Jesus said in Matthew 6:1-2

"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

However Jesus also said in Matthew 5:15-16

Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Mathew 5 and Matthew 6 seem to be in direct opposition to each other. Explain how a Christian leader exemplifies (embodies, demonstrates) both in Jesus.

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership (Day five) Not the only Apple on the Tree

We are focusing on four kinds of fruit in a leader's life. We have discussed *Character* and *Deeds*. Now we turn to the third kind of fruit that you produce: *Converts*.

III. Converts: Producing other Christians

For our study we are defining a convert as one who is converted to faith in Christ. When a person is converted it means that they have changed from one form or use or character to another.⁷ The Greek word that is translated convert in the New American Standard (NASB) and other Bible translations is στρέφω.⁸ The New International Bible (NIV) translates the Greek word change.

⁷ Oxford American Dictionary

⁸ **στραφήτε** verb subjunctive aorist passive 2nd person plural

[UBS] **στρέφω** (aor. pass. ἐστράφην, ptc. στραφείς) intrans. (mostly in pass.) turn, turn around (ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω she turned around Jn 20.14); change inwardly (Mt 18.3); turn away (Ac 7.42); trans. turn, offer (Mt 5.39); turn, change (Re 11.6); return, give back (Mt 27.3) BibleWorks 6.

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Convert seems the better word to use in translation. The Greek word (στροφή) means to turn around; it means a total change in direction. A convert changes inwardly and outwardly. Thus to become a disciple of Christ, one must have a total change of heart. Following an encounter with Christ called conversion, the convert begins to change from following the sinful self to following the righteous God.

“The biblical evidence, both within the Old (Psalm 51:13, Isaiah 1:27) and New Testaments (Matthew 18:3, Acts 3:19) emphasizes the importance of conversion. Persons need to be changed or converted. Conversion is made possible by the goodness and grace of God.”⁹

1. What would you say to someone who says he or she is a Christian, seems to be living a clean life but cannot remember a specific time of turning to Christ and turning away from self or sin?

We not only encounter the upfront, in your face sinners but we also encounter the sinners who have grown up in church and believe that they are Christians. However, neither have ever truly trusted Christ as Savior and Lord from their heart. Without being judgmental, ask caring and focused questions. This may help them see that Jesus is actually missing in their life. Another way of moving someone closer to God is by sharing your own story of meeting the Christ.

2. Write your personal testimony including what your life was like before Christ, how you met Christ and how your life has changed. This should be a short account that could be given in a minute or two. Different circumstances may call for a fuller and more complete story.

Most people do not like to be “preached at.” Your attitude and acceptance of them is important. God did make each of us in His image. Our goal is for them to seek their Creator through Christ. That is the only way that they will become true converts and disciples of Christ.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."^{NIV} Matthew 28:18-20

⁹ Butler, Trent, Holman Bible Dictionary, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1991, p. 293.

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3. Read Matthew 28:18. Jesus said, "All _____ in _____ and on _____ has been _____ to me.

4. Jesus says in verse 19 **since** "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, go and _____ of all _____ baptizing them in the _____ of the _____ and of the _____ and of the _____

These verses are known as the "Great Commission." Commission is defined as the giving of authority to someone to perform a certain task or duty.¹⁰ Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth and He is giving you authority to make disciples. In the Greek world a disciple was a student or pupil who would learn and follow his master's teachings and pass them on to others.

Jesus is commissioning you as an officer in the Kingdom of God. Therefore you are God's agent, His leader, His ambassador on this earth. Your duty and responsibility is to produce other Christians for fruitful service.

But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.⁸ When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:⁹ in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;¹⁰ in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;¹¹ and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.^{NIV} John 16:7-11

5. Read John 16:7-11. Who is responsible for convicting men, women and children of their guilt in regard to sin? _____

The pressure is off! It is not your job to make others feel guilty about their sins. Indeed, you cannot. The Holy Spirit moves hearts to confess and repent of their sins.

for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵ And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.^{NIV} Romans 10:13-17

Read Romans 10:13-17. Look at verse 14 at the word preaching. Earlier I used the word "preaching" negatively to mean giving out moral advice in an obnoxious or forceful manner. Sermons are delivered in our churches every Sunday and many are anointed by Almighty God.

¹⁰ Oxford American Dictionary

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However, it is really important to understand the real meaning of this word. It was not originally intended to mean sermons delivered in a church by a pastor. At the time of the New Testament, believers either met in the synagogue or in homes in small groups and there was not a “pastor” position yet.

The Greek word for preaching is κηρύσσω¹¹ and it means to proclaim, make known, or preach. Proclaim means to declare, announce or state publicly. In other words, Jesus died for you and you have been converted. You have been given authority to make Jesus known and reveal your conversion to the lone stranger, a small group or to thousands packed into a stadium or field.

6. Who has sent you to make the Gospel known (proclaim, preach)._____

7. How are your feet described in Romans 10:15?_____

8. Did everyone accept the good news (verse 16)? Yes No (Circle One)

Personal Application:

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you an opportunity to make Christ known today.

Describe the Spirit’s leading and result:_____

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership (Day Six) The Fruit of Lips

We have been focusing on four kinds of fruit in a leader’s life, *Character, Deeds, Converts* and now *Praise*. Since Lesson 14 is specifically about praise and worship we will have just a few paragraphs about it now. Praise, like all other fruit comes through dwelling in Christ.

IV. Praise: Praising God

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise-- the fruit of lips that confess his name.^{NIV} Hebrews 13:15 (Confess - to acknowledge, declare, praise)

1. According to Hebrews 13:15, how often do we praise God? _____

2. What does the author of Hebrews call the result or product of praising and thanking God?

_____ and _____

¹¹ κηρύσσοντος verb participle present active genitive masculine singular
[UBS] κηρύσσω proclaim, make known, preach BibleWorks 6.

Personal Application:

Pray and ask God to give you and those you lead the fruit of lips that praise Him continually.

Additional Study Comments and Questions:

A Christian leader produces good fruit. He is active in the Kingdom sowing and scattering seed. The leader is careful with thoughts, deeds and actions making sure they line up with Christ. However, the leader is not responsible for the end result. You may be called to leadership but may not see anyone following after you. We cannot control or make people do anything including loving the Lord. That is up to God.

He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain-- first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

Mark 4:26-29

3. Read Jesus parable from Mark 4:26-29. What good news is Jesus telling you in this parable about God partnering with you?

Just because we don't see any fruit, does not mean it is not there. There are many saints who have worked long and arduous years in God's will and saw no results. William Carey, born in England in 1761 sailed to India to win souls for Christ. He labored 7 years before having his first convert.

What if Carey had given up and given himself a going away (pity) party? He would not have opened up India for other missionaries as he did. Certainly he would not be known as the *Father of Modern Missions* as he is. He also would not have translated and printed the Bible into 40 languages.

Carey bore the fruit of *character, deeds and converts*. Towards the end of his life friends and saints had a tendency to compliment and speak highly of him. However, as William Carey told an old missionary friend, please do not speak of Dr. Carey, **but only Dr. Carey's God**. He also bore *the fruit of lips that confess his name*.

God told Abraham that He would make him fruitful (Genesis 17:6-7). Yes, He was called to be the Father of many nations yet didn't even have one son. Imagine the faith he had to have in light of his current circumstances. He waited many years before God blessed him with his son Isaac.

Lesson 3

4. Is there anything that you are personally waiting for and trying to be patient in the Lord?

Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs.¹⁴ Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it. Mark 11:13

The reason Jesus cursed the fig tree was because it had spouted its leaves early and showed signs that it had fruit. A fig tree was created and designed to produce fruit. Jesus was hungry and went to the tree to get the figs it was suppose to have but did not. In the same way, there are folks who look like Christians but are not. They are counterfeiting (faking it) as the fig tree with its green, lush leaves had done.

Christians can pretend to serve God, but a Christian leader is truly serving their King. He or she is not working for the applause of men but for the applause of heaven. The applause of heaven roars when God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are glorified and honored.

Today, God has given man new scientific and systematic ways for sowing seeds and producing fruit. This advanced technology produces modern farms and sophisticated equipment to significantly increase yield. Man has the ability to take fruit and fruit bearing plants all over the world.

In the same way Christians have many more resources for sowing the seeds of the gospel and producing much fruit. The resources all come from God. Yes, even technology and the amazing discoveries by atheists really are gifts from God to both to the believer and nonbeliever (Matthew 5:45).

However, don't get caught up in the resources or the programs for increase. Always remember that leadership is about our relationship with God and our relationship with others. This ultimately is what produces good fruit that will last. A successful Christian leader takes the initiative from God and makes connections with other people, saints and sinners alike. Sometimes connections are difficult, sometimes easy, but God is always in control.

Personal Application:

Pray and ask God to show you with whom he is working and how you can help? Would God like you to share the gospel, develop a friendship, disciple someone, or show a kindness?

Next: Lesson 4 - The Presence of God

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