



LESSON 5: YOU'RE GROWING. HOW CAN YOU TELL?

OBEDIENCE (DISCIPLESHIP)

A small boy in St Louis won a newspaper competition on “Whom I want to be like” with an entry choosing the evangelist, Billy Graham. Billy wrote to the boy, Dan Fotsch, “I am greatly honoured and humbled. I too, chose a Man a few years ago to be like. I have failed miserably on many occasions, but with all my heart I am praying that I will continue to grow and be like Jesus.”

FRUIT BEARING

The secret to growing and becoming more like Jesus is to spend time with Him. Growth will naturally take place in your life when you have a strong relationship with Jesus.

How did Jesus illustrate Christian growth and what did He say would be the result of staying close to Him? John 15:5

a) _____

b) _____

Just as a branch bears fruit because it is attached to the vine, so you will bear fruit if you stay attached to Jesus.

What is “fruit”? Galatians 5:22-23

You, and others around you, have probably already noticed that you have developed some new characteristics. Where you once hated, you now love; where you once doubted, you now have faith. You aren't perfect, but your Christian experience is beginning to show in your deeds and words. And that's all a result of your relationship with Jesus.

What will your faith in God produce? James 2:14-17

OBEDIENCE THROUGH FAITH

What is another result of knowing Christ? 1 John 2:3-4

(For further reading: 1 John 5:3)

What is the basis for keeping God's commandments? John 14:15

You have begun to love Him. Why? 1 John 4:19

Hearing the gospel, the unbelievable news that God loved you so much He died for you, awakened love for Him in your heart. Now that same love will make you obedient to His commandments. Your obedience is not something you can do all by yourself.

Who is working in you? Philippians 2:13

"While we cannot do anything to change our hearts or bring ourselves into

harmony with God; while we must not trust at all to ourselves or our good works, our lives will reveal whether the grace of God is dwelling within us. A change will be seen in the character, the habits, the pursuits." Steps to Christ, p 57.

"We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith." Steps to Christ, p 61.

When you love God, you want to obey Him.

What are His commandments that you will want to obey? John 13:34-35

What is love? Romans 13:8-10

How did Jesus illustrate that love as the fulfilling of the law? Matthew 22:36-40

Take a look at the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 20:3-17) See if you can discover how love is the fulfilling of each one. As an example, the first commandment says: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." If you really love God, will you put anything, any other god, ahead of Him? No.

Now look at the sixth commandment. "Thou shalt not kill." If you love your

neighbour, will you kill him? No.

As you analyse God's Ten Commandments through Jesus' words, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" and "Love thy neighbour as thyself," you can see that love is the only way to fulfil or keep any of them. Keeping the first four commandments show our love to God. Keeping the last six shows our love to man.

JESUS' EXAMPLE OF OBEDIENCE

Jesus lived a perfect life of love and obedience to God. Notice how completely He kept His Father's commandments:

In His Life:

What did He say He came to do? John 6:38

In His Words:

From where did He say He got His words? John 12:49

In His Death:

What other commandments did Jesus say He received of His Father? John 10:17-18

Even Jesus' death was an act of obedience. "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:8.

Jesus asks you to live the same kind of life of obedience. He says, "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross daily, and follow me." It sounds impossible to achieve, doesn't it? But Jesus promises you help.

GOD HELPS YOU OBEY

How did Jesus say He was able to do what God wanted Him to do? John 5:30, first part; John 10:30.

Jesus said His power to obey came from His connection with the Father and He desires you to have the same power.

What did He pray for His followers? John 17:21

How can you be “one with Jesus and the Father?” John 15:4 first part.

How else will God help you to keep His laws and be obedient to Him? Hebrews 10:16

All the way through, God will help you so that:

Your DOING will be an outgrowth of
Your LOVING which is an outgrowth of
Your STAYING with Him.

So choose every day to stay with Him.

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

Has Jesus ever pointed out to you from His Word, the Bible, some ways that you should be obeying Him? Take a minute to think about it and ask Him to speak to you about something specific He would like you to start doing. Did you think of anything? If you did, write it down; then pray and tell Jesus that you want to start doing what He wants you to do. Ask of His help, then thank Him for giving you help in obeying Him.

TO MEMORISE

John 14:15
Philippians 2:13