

In Jesus Steps

Disciples for Life

Unit 2: Christian Leadership

How to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Lesson 3

Fruit and Leadership

Day One

Real vs. Spiritual Fruit

In *Unit 2, Lesson 2: Tri-fold Love Poured Out*, you read about God's great love for you. You learned or were reminded of how deeply our triune God cares for you. All of Scripture speaks of this holy affection. God's unfailing love is revealed in His plan for a close relationship with you.

Read Numbers 23:19 and answer questions 1–2:

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill? Numbers 23:19

1. Why can we trust God's words?
2. Since God declares His love for you in the Bible, do you expect Him to act for your benefit (Isaiah 54:10; John 3:16)? Yes No Sometimes (Underline one.)
3. Explain why or why not you expect God to act for your benefit in #2.

When God speaks, He acts! Whatever God promises, He will fulfill. His words are *not* lifeless letters on a page, but life-giving promises of a contract. Our God is a God of covenant (agreement, pact). Sometimes there are conditions to His covenants and sometimes not. In other words, sometimes we must do something for the covenant or promise to be valid (binding).

Through His covenant, God promised a Savior to save us from our sins. In a dramatic and spectacular outpouring of love for you and me, God sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins. The *promise* of the Savior was *not* conditional. No one had to do anything for God to send Jesus to us. However, to reap (gather, get) the benefits (promises), including eternal life, one must trust in Jesus, the Messiah. The condition is to believe, and to act on that belief.

God says He loves people, and then He acted on His love by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit performed an astonishing feat of unconditional love. The death of Jesus Christ was not dependent on humanity's goodness or holiness. In fact, all people have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We were God's enemy at one time. Our words and actions showed that we did not love or care for Him. Nevertheless Jesus

—both God and man—willingly died a brutal death in payment for our sins. This is amazing love.

4. Think of someone who dislikes you and has harmed you either emotionally or physically. Would you be willing to suffer a painful and degrading death for that person? Yes No (Underline One)

5. Explain your answer in question 4 about whether or not you would die for another person.

You may be thinking or have written, “I could never love like that!” You would be right. No one can muster up this kind of love on their own. It comes from God and is supernatural. In Christ Jesus and through His Holy Spirit we have God’s love poured into our hearts, which enables us to love.

6. Read Romans 5:5. How can you love God and love others?

And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. Romans 5:5

This is a love that must be shared and not hoarded (stored, stockpiled). Freely you have been given love, and freely you must speak it, and act it out in the name of Jesus. The goal is to match your words with your actions as our Leader would do. This is fruitful living.

In Lesson 2 we learned about God’s unfailing love. We can rest in His love because of His faithfulness. However, resting in God’s love does not mean inactivity, but freedom from anxiety and angst (fear). We can relax emotionally because we are genuinely loved and appreciated by the most important Person in the universe. As we rest in God’s love, we are free to love and serve others as the Holy Spirit leads. We are *free* to live a fruitful life no matter where we are, physically or emotionally, at any moment in time.

William Carey (1761–1834) was born in England to Christian parents of humble means. William became a shoemaker’s apprentice (trainee) at age fourteen. He loved books, even foreign language books. He learned Latin while at home and Greek while at the shoemaker’s home. God provided a free tutor to help him learn and study at night. William had pronounced his faith in Jesus Christ and was baptized as an adult at age twenty-two.¹

Although William did not have a formal education, others took note of his knowledge and wisdom. He was asked to teach school and became the pastor of a small church. For the geography lessons for his students, he pieced together what was known of the world at that time. In addition to other features, he would write next to the country the number of pagans (nonbelievers). For example, next to India he wrote “8,000,000 Indians are pagans.”²

¹ Janet and Geoff Benge, “William Carey: Obligated to Go,” in *Christian Heroes: Then & Now* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 1998), 17–37.

² *Ibid.*, 50–51.

How would the Indians and “pagans” in other countries learn about Jesus? Someone needed to go and present to them the gospel. In fact, as William read and studied the Bible, he was certain that Christians are required to share their faith, even in other lands. But “this was not a popular view in 1787. Most ministers believed that Jesus had given the task of sharing the gospel message to his twelve disciples and when they died, so did the job itself. Now, no one was required to share their faith, especially not in dangerous, unknown regions. Many Christians went as far as to say that if God wanted the heathen in other lands to hear the gospel message, He could tell them Himself without any help from human beings. He was all powerful, wasn’t He?”³

7. Reread the paragraph above. What would *you* say to the ministers in 1787 who did not believe in Christians sharing their faith in Christ?

William Carey faced opposition to his biblical ideas for foreign missions. Rather than become discouraged, he took the arguments against evangelism and answered them in a manuscript. He made a biblical case that it was a Christian’s responsibility and duty to tell people about Jesus in other countries. The book had a long title, but simply came to be called, *Enquiry*.⁴

William argued that if we were not supposed to share the gospel like Jesus commissioned the apostles to do, then we should not baptize believers either since baptism was also part of His charge (Mark 16:15–16). He also wrote that Jesus’ authority was given to all believers to share the gospel. Therefore, the missionaries who traveled to foreign lands after the apostles died, would have gone without His authority. In addition, Jesus said, *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age* (Matthew 28:20). Jesus could not have *only* been talking to the apostles because they died before the end of the age. His divine presence is not limited to the first century.⁵

Today, we *do* believe in sharing the message of Jesus Christ. There are many Bible verses that encourage us to do so. These verses were not only meant for the first disciples, but for all Christians coming after them. Here are some verses to consider: Matthew 28:18–20 and Acts 8:1–4.

Have you taken note of the *fruit* in William’s life? He read for knowledge and wisdom, he taught school, he ministered to church members, and wrote a manuscript on reaching the lost in other countries. He was not argumentative but listened to the other ministers and then allowed the Holy Spirit to direct his study and response in love.

In the Bible, fruit is used both in the figurative (symbolic or representational) and the literal (actual meaning) sense. In literal language, fruit is the edible and good tasting pulp (fleshy tissue) around the seed(s) of certain plants and trees. In the fruit, the seeds are protected and then passed on to sow (spread, scatter, or plant) more of its kind.

³ Ibid., 56.

⁴ Ibid., 60.

⁵ See William Carey, *An Inquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, ed. Dan Graves, <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/study/module/carey> (accessed 01/10/2020).

Actual (or real) fruit tastes good not only to humans but to animals, fowls, and insects. They eat the sweet food, including the harder-to-digest seeds, and later excrete them on the ground. They also might carry the seeds on their bodies, which eventually fall off and onto the ground. Some of the seeds take root in the soil and then new fruit-producing plants or trees spring up from the ground. With this new fruit, more of God's creatures can be nourished and live.

Definitions: *Fruit* (figurative or metaphorical) is defined in this lesson as loving and righteous character traits, deeds, discipleship, and praise. These are all produced by a personal relationship with Jesus and in the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Figurative means the word(s) are not literal but are symbolic in nature. *Literal* is defined as taking words in their usual or most basic sense without *metaphor* or *allegory*. A *metaphor* is a figure of speech that compares one thing in terms of another. An *allegory* is a story that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning.

Read John 15:5 and answer questions 8–10:

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

8. When Jesus says that He is the vine (grape vine), is He speaking figuratively or literally?
(Underline One)
9. When Jesus says you will bear much fruit, is He talking about figurative or literal fruit?
(Underline One)
10. Are you able to live a fruitful life apart or separated from Jesus Christ? Yes No
(Underline One)

The word "fruit" is used throughout the Bible in both its literal and figurative meanings. God created literal (actual, real) seed-bearing fruit trees and plants (Genesis 1:11–12, 29). God also created figurative language to represent spiritual truths, such as the use of fruit in John 15:5. Fruit can mean virtuous character, good deeds, works, witnessing, and honoring God.

Figurative language is not only used to illustrate spiritual truths but also for vivid or dramatic effect. Consider Jesus' parables or stories and how He used aspects of the physical world to illustrate truth. Jesus was doing the same thing as His Father (John 5:19). Jesus used figurative language to help His disciples understand the kingdom of God and what was expected of them.

One of the first things that a disciple or Christian leader must learn is to rely on God. God has the plan, the people, the resources, and everything in place to make our lives fruitful and meaningful. Anything worth being, having, or doing comes from the hand of our triune God. Our ability to affect change or make a lasting difference in this world comes from Him and Him alone.

11. Read Deuteronomy 28:10–11. Who is responsible or in control of the literal fruit (crops) and the figurative fruit (descendants, rewards)?

Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will fear you. ¹¹The 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 ancestors to give you. Deuteronomy 28:10–11

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.*” For you and me to produce fruit as illustrated in the New and Old Testaments, we must obey Jesus and walk in His ways. However, before the walking and doing, comes the abiding and dwelling in Him.

Recall from *Unit 2, Lesson 1: Building a Leadership Model*, 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 (1828–1917) tells us, “Walking like Christ is the outward expression of the inner life.”⁶ We cannot take steps like Jesus unless we are truly living in Christ. Commitment to Christian leadership takes deep and profound abiding in the King of kings.

Pastor Murray goes on to write that “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.”⁷

12. Consider the above quote from Pastor Murray. What does “abiding” or “living in Christ” mean to *you*?

13. How are *you* going to remain, dwell, and live in Christ?

14. Action Steps: Read the Gospel of John, chapter 15. While reflecting on this passage, ask the Lord Jesus for a fruitful assignment to honor Him. Please write below how the Lord directed you and what happened:

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to #14 with the other disciples next week.

—End Day One—

⁶ Andrew Murray, *Like Christ* (Whitaker House, PA, 1983), 10. Andrew Murray (1828–1917) was a South African writer, educator, and pastor who authored 240 books.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

Day Two

Different Kinds of Fruit

There are various figurative meanings for the word “fruit” in the Bible. It is used in different ways to reveal a range of spiritual truths. 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 *1. Character, 2. Deeds, 3. Making Disciples, and 4. Praise*. All four are recorded in the Bible.

1. Character

Definition: *Character* is a set of traits or qualities that reveals a specific temperament or make-up. It is *character* that makes a person distinctive or sets their behavior apart from another. As Christians we should have positive qualities that set us apart as followers of Jesus.

Notice from the above definition, *character* sets a person apart from others. Holy *character* is being set apart for God’s purposes. Jesus exemplified (modeled) holy and fruitful character.

Read Galatians 5:22–26 and answer questions 15–17:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. Galatians 5:22–26 (Forbearance is defined as patient self-control; restraint and tolerance.)

15. List the nine fruit of the Spirit (vv. 22–23):

16. Would you like *your* friends to have these qualities? Yes No (Underline One)

17. Why would you like, or not like your friends to have the fruit of the Spirit qualities?

Of course, we would like our friends to have these qualities! We would *not* want friends who were hateful, bitter, violent, cruel, mean, bad, unfaithful, angry, and unable to control their behavior! In the same way, our friends would like to see positive and *not* negative qualities in us.

Improving our character means relying on the Holy Spirit to produce Jesus’ character in us. It does not mean that we have no part to play. We must cooperate and depend on the Spirit for our attitudes, thoughts, and actions. As we do this, the fruit of the Spirit will be displayed in our lives. In this sense, fruit means result, outcome, and even reward of effort or work. The fruit of following and submitting to the Spirit of God results in godly character.

Jesus Christ lived by the characteristics that make up a Christian leader. He lived by and in the fruit of love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. True leadership begins with displaying Christ's character. Remember, you can only consistently display what is in your heart and in your mind (Matthew 15:18–19).

18. Out of the nine fruits of the Spirit, which do you have the most trouble in displaying and why?

19. How would you like your discipleship team to pray for you regarding the fruit of the Spirit?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your prayer request to #19 with the other disciples next week. Take note or write down your team's prayer requests and pray as the Holy Spirit leads.

Perhaps you are having difficulty producing all the fruit. Do not worry. Remember, the Christian walk is progressive. We should be making progress, but sometimes the improvement is slow. Remember, there is no guilt or condemnation in Christ (Romans 8:1–2; Hebrews 10:22) for those who truly confess His name. Let us put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10–17) and move forward together with godly character, one step at a time.

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 (use Scripture as a basis), *second*, follow the Spirit's guidance and *third*, practice displaying these qualities daily *for the glory of God*. God is honored when we have and reflect Jesus' character.

20. Why is displaying or practicing godly character for *the glory of God* (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 1:5–6)?

Like other good works, displaying or practicing godly character has some risk. There is the danger we will try and turn attention on ourselves: *Look at how good and loving I am!* instead of thinking, *Look at how good and loving my Jesus is!* There is also the danger of "works of the flesh." That is, we practice good character (work) to earn favor or to get something from God or other people.

William Carey is a positive example of giving glory to God. His written work, *Enquiry*, had its intended result. God used it to change minds about international missions. When he and a group of ministers met to determine who would be their first missionary, William volunteered. Through his life and service in India, he would come to be known as "the father of modern missions."

Toward the end of Carey's life, some Christians tended to compliment and speak highly of him. However, as he told an old missionary friend. ". . . Say nothing of William Carey—*speak only of William Carey's Savior.*"⁸

⁸ Bengel, "Obliged to Go," 210.

21. Pray for *your* character to be pure and holy, that *you* are always genuine and never a phony and *you* have the right motivation in serving God. Insert your first and last name in the blanks,

“Say nothing of _____, speak only of _____’s Savior.”

22. Read Proverbs 4:20–23. How will *you* guard your heart and mind? (Other verses to consider: Psalm 18:30, 119:8; Proverbs 2:7–8; Philippians 1:10–11; Jude 1:21)

My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. ²¹Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; ²²for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body. Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.
Proverbs 4:20–23

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to #22 with the other disciples.

Action Steps: *Pray, Follow, and Practice*

The first fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22 is love. Today, you will pray, follow, and practice in order to develop the fruit of love in your life. Tomorrow and each day following take these three steps for each of the other eight characteristics (joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control).

1. Pray for each Fruit or Trait

Here is a sample prayer you can use to ask God for this supernatural love: “God of Love, pour out Your love into my heart by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus, You lived a life of sacrificial and self-giving love and proved a worthy and holy example for all people. You are the model of love I desire to imitate and follow. Father, make me love like Jesus. Amen.

Note: You can pray the above prayer, or your own prayer, for the traits that you want to develop in your life. Change the word from love to joy or peace, etc. and adjust the prayer accordingly for each trait. The same advice applies to the following two steps.

We also recommend using your own words when talking to God about each quality that you would like developed and improved in your life.

2. Follow the Spirit's Guidance

Throughout the day, look for the Holy Spirit's leading in loving God and others. As you encounter people, ask the Spirit what to say or do. This could be in person, by phone, email, text, social media, or any other means.

Holy Spirit, how can I love my God and this person today? Lead me to speak and act in ways that will bring glory to God and reveal His love to this person. Thank You! Amen.

3. Practice the Trait for the Glory of God

Character, like anything else we want to master, takes practice. We 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 “do” loving acts to become proficient (skillful) at revealing God’s love to others.

Love is a decision and act of the will. It is not a sentimental feeling. Recall: *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16). The Father planned, and Jesus chose to be born of a woman and walk on the earth. He chose the nails to pierce His hands and feet, not because He was overly emotional, but because He had a powerful love for the Father and for us. We choose to follow in Jesus’ footsteps and love for the same reasons.

Who can you choose to love today or tomorrow? Who do you know who is lonely, unpopular, or hurting? Choose to spend time with that person this week. Ask them caring questions and listen intently to their answers. Or simply ask Jesus for a way that you can practice love.

23. Write and explain what happened when you prayed, followed, and practiced “love” (and joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) for the glory of God. Consider keeping a log in a notebook, file, phone, or computer for handy reference.

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to #23 with the other disciples next week. Your team might want to make these Action Steps part of your meetings until all the fruit of the Spirit has been prayed, followed, and practiced.

—End Day Two—

Day Three

The Fruit of Right Action: Deeds

We are focusing on four kinds of fruit in a leader's life. The first is *Character*, which we discussed in *Day Two* of this lesson. Now we are going to look at *Deeds*. A deed is simply something we do or accomplish. Your deeds or good works should flow naturally out of your character as you follow the Holy Spirit's lead. Giving money for God's work would come under this category.

2. Deeds

Read Acts 10:38 and answer questions 24–27:

... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. Acts 10:38

24. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the _____ and _____.

25. What did Jesus, our leader, go around doing with the Holy Spirit and power?

26. God was with Jesus; is He with *you* (1 Corinthians 3:16)? Yes No (Underline One)

27. Regrading question 26, why or why not is God with you as He was with Jesus?

Accountability: Be prepared to share answers to #24–27 with your discipleship team.

28. Read Isaiah 45:19. How does the LORD speak and declare (proclaim, announce)?

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 (Vain in this context means unsuccessful or not having the intended result.)

God always speaks what is right and true. He does not ask people to seek Him and then 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 He does is right. God is righteous.

29. Read Revelation 15:4. How are God's acts described (Compare 1 Samuel 12:7)?

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.

Revelation 15:4

God created and designed the world and everything in it. All His acts are righteous. He has all knowledge and wisdom; all He has created is good and right. In fact, all good things come from God. The world is ordered by our Creator and not us; He decides what is right.

God is sovereign; He is in control of all things, including Satan. God's sovereignty means He allows certain events or circumstances in our world we may not understand. At times we all pity ourselves—we feel we have been dealt a sad hand in the game of life. However, God takes everything into consideration when our life has been played out on this earth (Luke 16:19–31).

Our heavenly Father is righteous and fair. Our perspective (viewpoint) is limited, but God's is eternal. He desires our everlasting good and will work out all things in believers' lives to make us like Christ Jesus (Romans 8:28–29).

Read Philippians 1:11 and answer questions 30–31:

... filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:11

30. Who is your source of righteousness?

31. Who receives glory for our righteousness in Christ Jesus?

The Greek noun *dikaioσune* (δικαιοσύνη), translated righteousness in Philippians 1:11, is used by the apostle 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). When we obey God, we are doing what is right, and satisfactory results will follow. We may not actually see the positive results in our lifetime, but they will be stored up for us in heaven (Matthew 6:19–21).

We can obey God because His law has been written on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:31–33; Hebrews 8:8–12) through Christ Jesus. Before I trusted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, a friend gave me a Bible. I began reading it and then in frustration put it down. I thought, (and rightly so) nobody can be this good. I did not even want to try. I put the Bible down and did not pick it up again until after I accepted Jesus as the Savior—17 years later. As I began to earnestly study God's Word, I learned it is the Spirit of Christ who enables me to be righteous and accomplish righteous deeds. Although the Spirit of Christ enables us, we still have the freedom and responsibility to follow Him, and to choose right or wrong actions.

Read Romans 7:18 and answer question 32–33:

For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. Romans 7:18

32. Do you ever get frustrated like Paul and wonder why you cannot carry out the good works that you would like to do? Yes No Sometimes (Underline One)

33. Explain why, or why you do not, get frustrated in carrying out good works in question 32.

Accountability: Be prepared to share answers to #32–33 with your discipleship team.

Paul is saying that nothing good lives in his sinful nature and from this nature he cannot carry out good. He must rely on Jesus to carry out his good works and it is a process (2 Corinthians 3:18). Through Jesus we receive a new nature and become a new creation. However, we do not lose our sin nature, and this can sometimes cause a struggle within us.

No one has the power to overcome their sinful nature in their own strength but must rely upon the Holy Spirit. This is an important concept for the Christian leader to grasp. Otherwise, we may live in a state of frustration and defeat trying to work in our own strength. Knowing this truth of relying on Jesus and His righteousness will allow us to help others overcome the obstacles and heartaches they may face in desiring to do what is good, but unable to carry it out.

34. Read Romans 1:17. How do you know you are righteous?

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

Read Romans 8:1–4 and answer questions 35–38:

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

Definition: *Condemnation* is the English word translated from the Greek word, *katakrima* (κατάκριμα). It is a legal technical term for the result of judging, including both the sentence and its execution. The Greek word can also be translated penalty, sentence of doom, and punishment.

Definition: *Flesh* is the skin and meat of humans and animals. In Romans 8:1–4, Paul uses *flesh* symbolically as a sinful and sensual power tending toward sin and opposing the Spirit's working. *Flesh* represents dedication to physical desires rather than obedience to God.

35. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because (v. 2):

36. How did God condemn sin in sinful man (v. 3)?

37. Why did God condemn sin in sinful man (v. 4a)?

38. We do not live according to the flesh but according to the _____ (v. 4b).

William Carey's decision to pack up and move to India for the sake of declaring the Gospel message was a righteous deed. He looked to his Savior and did not worry about the five-month voyage to India. This deed was the first of many righteous actions as Carey followed his Savior step by step. It was not always easy, because he faced many hardships and challenges in his life as a missionary.

On his way to India, the ship he boarded ran into a violent storm that raged for two days. He went about helping the crew in whatever was needed. Then, once in India, he had to learn the language, find housing, and look for a way to support his wife and children who accompanied him. While in India he faced malaria-carrying mosquitoes, robbers, tigers, and disease. One of his young sons died in India. Each day Carey had to choose to trust God and keep doing the next righteous deed as the Spirit led.⁹

Recall that Carey had a gift for languages. He did not let his God-given talent go to waste. He translated the Bible into Bengali as the Holy Spirit led and enabled him. He worked even while facing hardships at home and in the field. His first wife suffered from depression and delusions. He and others cared for her at their home in India until her death of a fever in 1807.¹⁰

Read Philippians 2:12–13 and answer questions 39–42:

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, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Philippians 2:12–13

39. Who helps you choose God's plan for your life and act accordingly (v. 13)?

40. If God is working in you for His purpose, what is your responsibility (v. 12)?

41. Why does Paul say *to work out your salvation with fear and trembling* (v. 12c)? (Read Luke 3:8–14; 1 Corinthians 2:3, 9:24–27; 2 Corinthians 7:15)

⁹ Ibid., 101, 117.

¹⁰ Ruth A. Tucker, *William Carey's Less-than-Perfect Family Life*, <<https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/william-careys-less-than-perfect-family-life>>(accessed 1/25/2020).

Paul is saying that if you are saved, you should be laboring for God and His kingdom by being obedient and reverent (showing extreme respect). Christ, our Leader, set the example for how we should labor in producing good fruit. He not only listened and acted on His Father's instructions, but He also revered and honored Him. He did not complain about His assignments or look for ways to satisfy His own needs. 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 going to the cross, He lived a purposeful and joyful life, performing righteous acts wherever He went.

42. What would you tell those who are discouraged in their ability to produce fruit?

Accountability: Be prepared to share answers to #39–42 with your discipleship team.

If you or another believer are discouraged about your ability to produce fruit, remember that God has the plan! He is in charge of our good works. Ask God each day for your assignments. It does not matter how small or insignificant the action may seem; *it is our prompt obedience that counts*. You will be commended on how well you follow Jesus and not commended on following your own desires. Remember, a simple act of kindness, done with the right, humble motivation, warms our Father's heart while a "big" deed done with wrong, prideful motivation does not.

Another aspect of discouragement over the lack of good works is wrong expectations about God's plan. We may have misinterpreted what God wants us to do and need to pray for additional wisdom and direction. There is also the possibility of unconfessed sin God would like addressed.

Read 1 John 1:9–2:1 and answer question 43–46:

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 is not in us.* ¹¹*My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.* 1 John 1:9–2:1 (Confess is to acknowledge, declare, admit, or say plainly. An advocate defends and represents a person.)

43. As a believer what action are you supposed to take if you sin?

44. Who is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins when we confess (v. 9)?

45. Who purifies us from all unrighteousness (v. 9)?

46. Who is our advocate with God the Father (1 John 2:1)?

Sanctification is a word used to describe our growth or maturity in our likeness to Jesus. That is, we continually move forward in personal holiness and acting or being like Jesus. 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.

Still, we cannot sanctify ourselves. Holiness and fruit begin with the Holy Spirit within us. We *must* depend on Him. Nothing we do apart from our triune God has any merit or value.

However, this does not mean our role is passive (inactive), just waiting for God to do all the work or sitting around waiting for a sign from heaven. Throughout the Bible we are told and commanded to do many things. If we see a brother or sister in need, we know we are to help them because God has already instructed us to do this. The point is for us to pray fervently for God's will and direction but also to act upon the commands He has already given us in the Bible.

Read Acts 26:20 and fill-in the blanks for question 47:

First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds. Acts 26:20 (Repentance is a change of heart and a turning from one's sins.)

47. Paul says that he preached so that people (Jews and Gentiles) would repent and turn to God and demonstrate or prove their _____ by their _____ (v. 20c).

Paul was saying something like this: “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 (give evidence) that you are a Christ follower.”

The Lord gave a similar message to the Israelites through the prophet Jeremiah about 600 BC. The Lord said, “So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions” (Jeremiah 18:11). John the Baptist also preached on the need to “produce fruit in keeping with repentance” (Luke 3:8).

How do we demonstrate our repentance by our deeds? The Bible teaches us about good deeds—why, how, and when to act. In addition, God has things for us to do while we are on this earth and will reveal them to us as we follow Him. 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 our desire and willingness to honor God through our actions.

A Conundrum (a Puzzle or Challenge)

48. Read Mathew 6:1–2 and Matthew 5:15–16. These passages of Scripture appear contradictory. Explain how a Christian leader does not practice righteousness in front of others, and at the same time lets others see their good deeds?

Jesus said in Matthew 6:1–2: (Underlining added by author for focus.)

“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²So 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 others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.” (Hypocrisy is the practice of claiming to have moral standards or beliefs to which one's own behavior does not conform; pretense.)

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. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Accountability: Be prepared to share answers to #42 with your discipleship team.

In Mathew 6:1–2, Jesus is talking about the condition of our heart. What is the motivation of our *righteousness* or *good deeds*? If we are doing good deeds to bring attention or praise to ourselves, we are hypocrites. We are just pretending to care about God or people to inflate our own ego.

We are *not* to do good works for puffing up ourselves, but for God’s honor. Jesus is teaching in Matthew 5:15–16 that people *should* see our character and deeds and praise God. Our kindness and helpfulness should shine forth before others and glorify our Father in heaven.

49. Thank God for all the good actions He has done through *you* since becoming a Christian. Ask God to forgive you for the times you tried to take credit for His work. Determine to always give God the honor only He deserves. I have prayed. Yes No (Underline One)

Not to us, LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.
Psalm 115:1

—End Day Three—

Day Four

The Fruit of a Changed Life: Making Disciples

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 you produce: *Making Disciples*.

3. Making Disciples

We are defining a disciple as one who believes in Jesus, the risen Lord, and follows Him. A disciple is one who has converted, that is, changed from one form or character to another. The Greek word that is translated *convert* in the New American Standard (NASB) and other Bible translations is *strepho* (στρέφω). It means to turn and change inwardly. The New International Version (NIV) uses *change* to translate the Greek word, *strepho*.

A convert changes inwardly and outwardly. To become a disciple of Christ a person must have a total change of heart. Following an encounter with Christ is sometimes called conversion. Thus, we change by turning away from the sinful self to following our righteous God. The biblical evidence, both within the Old Testament (Psalm 51:13; Deuteronomy 10:16) and the New Testament (Matthew 18:3; Acts 3:19) emphasizes the importance of change and turning to God.

When we have decided to follow Christ, we have a story to tell. This story is known as our personal testimony. It is simply how we came to know Christ and how He changed our lives. It is a way to share the gospel with others by explaining our personal conversion and experience.

50. Write your personal testimony (statement) including what your life was like before Christ, how you met Christ, and how your life has changed. This should be a condensed version that could be given in 30–60 seconds. Different circumstances may call for a fuller and more complete story.

Accountability: Be prepared to share your personal testimony to #50 with your team.

Read Matthew 28:18–20 and answer questions 51–53:

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

- 51.** Who has received all authority in heaven and on earth (v. 18)?
- 52.** Since Jesus has received all authority in heaven and on earth, what does He command?
- 53.** When you make disciples, are they also required to make disciples? Yes No (Underline One)

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #51–53 with your discipleship team.

The passage, Matthew 28:18–20, is known as the “Great Commission.” Commission is defined as giving authority to someone to perform a certain task or duty. Jesus has *all authority* in heaven and on earth and He was giving His first disciples authority to make new or additional disciples.

These verses are still valid and applicable to our own lives. Jesus is giving His authority to His disciples *today*. Are you a disciple of Christ? Disciples are students or pupils who learn about and follow their Master. They take Jesus’ teachings to heart and pass them on to others. If you answered, *Yes, I am a disciple of Christ*, then you are commanded to make disciples for Jesus and teach them to obey Him.

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. Our duty and responsibility are to produce other Christians for fruitful service.

Action Step

54. Pray and ask God to help you make one disciple within the next 12 months. Pray also for whatever you feel is lacking in your ability to reach out to the lost and make disciples. Keep a record in your journal or notepad. For discipleship growth, help them become part of an In Jesus Steps team.

I have prayed: Yes No (Underline One)

This may be a long-term Action Step, so check in with the other disciples regarding each other’s progress. Pray and help each other in any way the Holy Spirit leads.

55. Read John 16:7–11. Who proves the world to be in the wrong about sin because people do not believe in Jesus (vv. 8–9)?

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.⁸ When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹about sin, because people do not believe in me; ¹⁰about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
John 16:7–11 (Satan is the prince of this world that is condemned.)

The pressure is off! It is not our job to make others feel guilty about their sins. Indeed, you and I cannot. The Holy Spirit is the one who moves hearts to comprehend their wrongdoing and unbelief. Our job is to share the person of Jesus Christ with others and pray for the Spirit to convict them of their sins.

Believers are not only convicted of their sins, but of Jesus' righteousness (innocently crucified). He is God's Son, the Messiah (that is, the promised deliverer). The Holy Spirit proves that Jesus is the righteous one who takes away sins. The Spirit proves the world wrong (especially the Jews who sought His death at that time) that Jesus was a blasphemous sinner. No, Jesus was not. The Holy Spirit proves that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the righteous one and chosen deliverer.

Jesus goes to the Father through the wonder of the resurrection where He is accepted by God; the ransom was accepted, and sinners can be justified. God the Father approved of Jesus' work on the cross and once Christ returned to the Father, the disciples would not see Him again until judgment day.

Read Romans 10:13–17 and answer questions 56–59:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” ¹⁴How, 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? ¹⁵And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” ¹⁶But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” ¹⁷Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. Romans 10:13–17

56. How are people going to be saved (v. 13)?

57. How will people know about Jesus and how they can be saved through Him (v. 14)?

58. How are feet described that bring the good news of Jesus Christ (v. 15)?

59. Did everyone accept the good news of Jesus Christ (v. 16)? Yes No (Underline One)

The word *preaching* in Romans 10:14 is positive and life-giving. However, *preaching* can be used in a negative sense. It can mean giving out moral advice in an obnoxious or forceful manner. The word came to have this unflattering definition because some believers did not share Jesus in love, but in arrogance and self-righteousness.

The Greek word translated preaching is *kerusso* (κηρύσσω). It means to proclaim, make known, or preach. Proclaim means to declare, announce, or state publicly. You can declare or tell the truth about Christ to one person or many—the Holy Spirit will lead you. Your authority to proclaim, make known, or preach the gospel comes from Jesus Himself (Matthew 28:18–20).

William Carey had sailed to India to win souls and labored *seven* years before seeing the first convert, Krishna Pal. Carey had no problem drawing a crowd, but people were not willing to give up their false gods and solely follow Jesus. Most of the time Carey was optimistic and cheerful, but he did despair several times in his life. Each time, he relied on His Savior to pull him through. Carey labored 41 years in India and never returned to England.¹¹

After waiting seven years, Carey’s impact was life-changing and long-lasting. As Galen Royer wrote, “When Carey died there were in connection with the mission he founded some 30 missionaries, 40 native teachers, 45 stations and substations, and approximately 600 church members. In addition, one must remember that he was the cause of the forming of the English Baptist Missionary Society, thru whom Christ has been brought to thousands in different parts of the world.”¹²

Prior to going to India on May 30, 1792, at a ministerial gathering, Carey “preached from Isaiah 54:2–3, in which he laid down his two general arguments, which have since become a missionary motto, “Expect great things from God: attempt great things for God.”¹³

60. How does William Carey’s life encourage you?

Action Step

61. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you an opportunity to make Christ known to someone within the next week. Describe the Holy Spirit’s leading and result:

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to #60—61 with your discipleship team.

—End Day Four—

¹¹ Fred Barlow, “William Carey: Missionary-Evangelist,” <<https://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/bcarey1.html>> (accessed 02/4/2020).

¹² Galen B. Royer, “William Carey: The Father of Modern Missions,” <<https://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/bcarey3.html>> (accessed 02/4/2020).

¹³ Ibid.

Day Five

The Fruit of Lips

We have been focusing on four kinds of fruit in a leader's life: *Character, Deeds, Making Disciples*, and now *Praise*. Praise, like all other fruit, comes through living in, and for Christ. *Christian Leadership: The Leader in Worship, Lesson 17* is centered on praise, so we will keep this section brief.

4. Praise

Read Hebrews 13:15 and answer questions 62–63:

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. Hebrews 13:15 (Profess is to admit and acknowledge.)

62. How often should we offer praise (honor, tribute) to God?

63. When we speak good and truthful things about God, how are our lips described?

Action Steps

64. Pray for the *fruit of lips* that profess and praise God. I have prayed and asked God to give me the *fruit of lips* that openly and continually profess and praise His name. Yes No (Underline One)

65. Look for an opportunity to praise God openly over the next few days. Write about your experience.

Accountability: Be prepared to share #65 with your discipleship team. When you meet, tell them how you praised God and the circumstances surrounding your *sacrifice of praise*.

Christian leaders produce good fruit. They are active in the kingdom, sowing (planting and scattering) seed. Leaders are careful with thoughts, deeds, and actions, making sure they line up with Christ's example.

Leaders or disciples are accountable to God for planting and scattering but are not responsible for the result. The following Parable of the Growing Seed illustrates this point. Jesus may have explained this parable to His disciples, but the meaning is not recorded for us in the Bible.

We do know from a similar story, the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:2–9) that the seed is the Word of God (the Bible). The seed that grows and matures represents people receptive to God and His Word. We also learn from Scripture that God makes His Word grow and mature within a person's mind and heart independently of human effort. (1 Corinthians 3:6).

Read Mark 4:26–29 and answer questions 66–67:

*He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground.
27Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. 28All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. 29As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”* Mark 4:26–29

66. What is the kingdom of God like?

67. Explain the meaning of the Parable of the Growing Seed in Mark 4:26-29.

The principle of the Sower and Growing Seed Parables is true for producing fruit. We are responsible for obeying God by sowing or planting the truth of His Word into the fruit of *character, deeds, making disciples, and praise*. God is responsible for the resulting crop and therefore, the growing of His kingdom. Sometimes the fruit trees seem bare, that is, our obedience and righteous works seem to have no beneficial effect. However, in God’s economy (plan) success may look differently or be on another, more purposeful timetable.

Missionary William Carey continued to praise God and serve Him without converts—the outward sign of success. What if Carey had given up and had a going-away pity party? He would not have opened-up India for other missionaries, which he did. Certainly, he would not be known as the *Father of Modern Missions*. And most definitely he would not have translated and printed the Bible into 40 languages. Carey trusted God, persevered, and bore the fruit of *character, deeds, making disciples, and praise*.

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 did not even have one son at the time. Imagine the faith he had to have considering his current circumstances. Plus, Abraham waited 25 years before God blessed him with his son Isaac.

68. Please write or type if there is anything that you are personally waiting for and trying to be patient in the Lord.

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to #68 with the other disciples.

69. Read Mark 11:13–14. Why was Jesus displeased with the fig tree?

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. 14Then he said to the tree, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard him say it. Mark 11:13–14

Jesus was displeased with the fig tree because it had sprouted (developed) 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 supposed to have but did not. In the same way, there are people who appear to be Christians but are not. They are counterfeiting (faking it) serving Christ and looking fruitful, just as the fig tree had done with its green, lush leaves.

The next day when the Jesus and His disciples walked by the fig tree, it had withered from its roots. In other words, the fig tree was dead. Jesus was warning of future judgment for people who are just pretending to believe and trust God.

One way to confirm our faith in Christ, is to do everything for Him. We keep our focus on Christ and not on people. Our desire is not to please people, but Jesus.

Action Step

70. Memorize Colossians 3:23–24:

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Accountability: Be prepared to recite your memory verse #70 with your other team members.

Today, there are new scientific and systematic ways for sowing seeds and producing fruit. This advanced technology produces modern farms and sophisticated equipment to significantly increase yield. Technology has also advanced communication and transportation systems. Thus, crops and produce can be shipped all over the world.

In the same way, Christians have many more resources for sowing the seeds of the gospel and producing much fruit. We have advanced systems of communication and transportation systems to help us. The internet and social media have opened a plethora (vast amount) of ways to connect with others around the globe. We can also journey to any place in the world via air travel and other modes of travel. Thus, believers can produce fruit to spread the gospel and make disciples worldwide.

Do not get “caught up” in the systems for the fruit increase and lose sight of the reason for your work. Leadership is about our relationship with God and our relationship with others. Successful Christian leaders keep their focus on Jesus, following Him in faith and obedience.

Action Step

71. Pray and ask God to show you with whom He is working and how you can help. Would God like you to show a kindness, do a good deed, develop a friendship, share the gospel, or speak out in praise to God? Please write a summary of what God showed you and how you followed through (or plan to follow through):

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to #71 with the other disciples next week.

—End of Day Five and Lesson Three—

Next—Unit 2: Christian Leadership, Lesson 4: The Presence of God

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