

CLI Leadership Bible Study: Lesson 3

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

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

In Lesson 2: *Triple Love Poured Out*, you read about God's great love for you. You learned or were reminded of how deeply the 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 a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, 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?

****See end of lesson for repeat of questions and blank spaces for you to write your answers.**

When all the questions have been completed, return your answer sheets to CLI. You may keep this lesson for your own study or review. You may pass it on to another or discard.

2. Since God declares His love for you, do you expect Him to act in your behalf (benefit)?
Yes No Maybe (Circle One) Explain your answer:

When God speaks, He acts! Whatever God promises, He will fulfill. His words are *not* lifeless marks on a page, but life giving symbols 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 have to do something the Lord has required in order to make the covenant or promise valid (binding).

Through covenant God promised a Savior, a Messiah 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 Messiah. The condition is to believe and of course act on that belief.

God says He loves us and then He acted it out for us on the cross. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit performed an astonishing feat of unconditional love. Christ's death was not dependent on our goodness, beauty or uniqueness. In fact, mankind had become bad, ugly and common. Nevertheless, the Godhead made a decision to love and save. This love was not sentimental and weak. It was rational and strong.

3. 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? Why or Why not?

Truly, we were God's enemy at one time. Our words and actions showed that we did not love or care for Him. Nevertheless Jesus, God and man, willingly died a brutal death in payment of our sins. This is love.

You may be thinking, "I could never love like that!" You would be right. No one can muster up this kind of love on his own. It comes from God and is supernatural. In Christ Jesus and through His Holy Spirit, you have God's love poured into your heart.

And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given 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, the Lord Jesus would do. This is fruitful living.

In Lesson 2 you read about resting in the triune God's unfailing love. Resting in this case is not inactivity, but freedom from anxiety and angst (fear). We can relax emotionally because we are truly 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 us. We are free to live a fruitful life no matter where we are, physically or emotionally, at any moment in time.

To make a point about this kind of life, think about your favorite fruit. Maybe you have several favorites as 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 is also beautifully colored in purples, reds, blues, oranges, and yellows. No wonder we like to display bowls filled with such delicious and colorful treats.

When we produce fruit, we manifest (make clear) character that is inviting and refreshing. Like the fruit, our personalities are colored in a way that is pleasant. Folks look at us and feel they can approach us. And when they do, they are healthier and happier for knowing or coming into contact with us.

4. Now imagine yourself as a bowl of fruit. Picture what people see when they look at you. Consider what flavors they would taste in talking with you. Reflect on how others would rate the way that you treat them. Ask God for one thing you can do to improve your character so that you can connect with more people. Write what God tells you and how we may pray for you:

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 generally good tasting pulp (fleshy tissue) around the seed(s) of certain plants and trees. Through the fruit its seeds are protected and passed on to sow (spread, scatter, or plant) more of its kind.

Actual or real fruit tastes good not only to man but to animals, fowls and insects. They eat the sweet food, including the harder to digest seeds, and excrete them on the ground. Or they might just carry the seeds on their bodies which eventually fall to the ground. Some of the seeds take

root in soil and then new fruit producing plants or trees spring up from the earth. With additional fruit, more of God's creatures can be nourished and live.

Definition: Fruit (figurative or metaphorical¹) is defined in this lesson as loving and righteous character traits, deeds and actions that are produced by a personal relationship with Jesus and the empowerment of the Spirit.

Read John 15:5 and answer questions 5-7:

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. John 15:5

5. When Jesus says that He is the vine (grape vine), is He speaking figuratively or literally?
6. What kind of fruit is Jesus talking about: figurative or literal? (Circle One)
7. Are you able to live a fruitful life apart or separated from Jesus Christ? Yes No (Circle 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 illustrate spiritual truths (Psalm 23). He uses figurative language for vivid or dramatic effect.

Consider Jesus' parables² and how He used 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.

One of the first things that any 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 triune God. We recognize that when people are attracted to us, they are attracted to Christ. Our ability to affect change or make a lasting difference in this world comes from God.

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. Deuteronomy 28:10-11

8. Read Deuteronomy 28:10-11. 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

¹ Figurative means the word(s) are not literal but are symbolic in nature. A metaphor is a figure of speech that compares one thing in terms of another.

² A parable is a simple or short story intended to illustrate a moral or spiritual truth.

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.

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.”³ 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.

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.”⁴

Definition: Abide means to live or reside in a place. It is an old definition and not one that we use in everyday language. Older Bible translations may use the word abide in various passages. The actual Greek word meno (μένω) that is used in such verses as John 15:4, 6-7, 9-10 is defined in English as remain, stay, abide, live, dwell, last, endure, and continue.

9. What does abiding or living in Christ mean to you?

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

11. Personal Application: Read and meditate on John, chapter 15. While meditating on this passage, ask the Lord Jesus for a fruitful assignment to honor Him. Please share how the Lord directed you and what happened:

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

There are various figurative meanings of 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 (grouped) as *Character, Deeds, Converts and Praise*. All four are recorded in the Bible.

I. Character: Displaying Christian 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 a Christian we should have positive qualities that set us apart as a follower of Jesus.

³ 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)

⁴ Ibid, p.13

Notice that it is character that sets a person apart from others. Holy character is being set apart for God's purposes. Jesus exemplified (model, example) holy and fruitful 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

12. Read Galatians 5:22-26 and list the fruit of the Spirit:

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

Sure we would like our friends to have these qualities! We would not want friends who were hateful, bitter, violent, impatient, mean, bad, unfaithful, angry and with an uncontrollable temper! But instead of worrying over another's character, we must seek to improve our own.

Improving our character means relying on the Holy Spirit to produce His 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 our very nature. As we do this, the fruit of the Spirit will be displayed in our lives. In this sense fruit means result, product, outcome, consequence and even reward of effort or work. The fruit of following and submitting to the Spirit of God results in godly character.

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).

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

15. 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 the fruit. Do not 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). Let us put on our 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 basis), **second** follow the Spirit's guidance and **third** practice displaying these qualities daily *for the glory of God*. God is honored when His Son's followers have and reflect His character.

16. 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.

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

17. Read Proverbs 4:23. How will you guard your heart?

so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ-- to the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:10-11

18. Read and meditate on Philippians 1:10-11. What is God telling you about the “fruit of character?”

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 (joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control).

A. Pray for a Particular Character Trait

O 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 that I desire to imitate and follow. Father, make me love like Jesus. Amen.

Note: You can pray the above prayer for all the characteristics that you want to develop in your life. Simply adjust the prayer and change the word love to joy or peace etc. The same advice applies to the following two steps in making adjustments. We also recommend using your own words when talking to God about each quality that you would like developed and improved.

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 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.”

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.

Love is a decision and act of the will. It is not sentimental feeling. Jesus chose the nails to pierce His hands and feet, not because of a giddy boyhood crush, but because He had a powerful love of the Father and us. We choose to follow in Jesus' footsteps and love for the same reasons.

Who do you know who is lonely, unpopular, or hurting? Choose to have lunch with that person this week. Ask her or him caring questions and listen intently to their answers. Be a friend. If having lunch is not possible, ask the Spirit for another way that you can practice love.

19. 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: Deeds

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. 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.

II. Deeds: Working Deeds in Righteousness

Read Acts 10:38 and answer questions 20-22:

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

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

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

22. God was with Jesus; is He with you? Yes No Maybe (Circle One) Why or Why not?

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 means unsuccessful or not having the intended result)

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

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.

Revelation 15:4

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

25. 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 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.

26. How could you help someone who feels that life or circumstances are not right or fair (Job 38-42 & Isaiah 55:8-9)?

God is sovereign and in control of all things including Satan. There is no denying that God has *allowed* the event or circumstance that has transpired (happened) in our lives. At times we may all pity ourselves and feel that we have been dealt a sad hand in the game of life. But God takes everything into consideration when our life has been played out on this earth (Luke 16:19-31).

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

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

27. Read Philippians 1:11. Who is the source of your righteousness?

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 *dikaioσύνη* (δικαιοσύνη), translated righteousness in Philippians 1:11, 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). When we obey God we are doing what is right and good results will follow. Sometimes the results may not seem good in our eyes, but the outcome *will* be tribute⁵ to God.

⁵ Tribute is an expression of praise or admiration. It also gives evidence of God's inherent goodness and worth.

We have the ability to 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 started 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 was saved - 17 years later. As I began to earnestly study God's Word, I learned that it is the Spirit of Christ who enables me to be and do good. Nevertheless, I can still choose my own way and fall into sin.

Even as a Christ follower, 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.*

28. 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 (Circle one) Explain:

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 his or her 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 not carrying it out.

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." Romans 1:17

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

Read Romans 8:1-4 and answer questions 30-32:

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. Romans 8:1-4

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

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

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

Read Philippians 2:12-13 and answer questions 33-36:

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. Philippians 2:12-13

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

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

35. Why does Paul say *to work out your salvation with fear and trembling* (v.12)? (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 by being obedient and reverent (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, He 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.

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

Personal Application: Thank God for His righteousness and good works

Take time right now and thank God for specific acts or things that He has done in your own life.

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. Revelation 15:3

Ask forgiveness for the times that you have tried to take credit for your good deeds. Determine to always give God the honor that He deserves. Not to us O Lord but to You be the glory!

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 you follow Jesus and judged on how you follow your own plan and 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 good works is incorrect expectations from what God has purposed. We may have misinterpreted what God wants us to do and need to pray for wisdom and direction. There is also the possibility of unconfessed sin that God would like addressed.

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. 1 John 1:9-2:1 (Confess - to acknowledge, declare, admit, say plainly)

37. Read 1 John 1:9-2:1. As a believer what action are you supposed to take if 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 passive (inactive) just waiting for God to do all the work or sitting around waiting for a sign. 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 because God has already instructed us to do this. The point is to pray fervently but if you do not feel God leading in a certain direction, act upon the commands that He has already given in the Bible.

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. Acts 26:20 (repentance - change of heart, turning from one's sins, change of way)

38. Read Acts 26:20. Paul says 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 this concept was so important to the Christian life that he repeatedly taught people about proving their repentance by their deeds.

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 our desire and willingness to honor God through your actions.

Conundrum (Puzzle, Challenge)
(Underlining in Scripture by author of lesson)

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.

39. Mathew 6:1-2 and Matthew 5:15-16 seem to be in direct opposition to each other. Explain how a Christian leader is careful not to do righteous acts before men and let men see their deeds?

Personal Application:

40. 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.* Colossians 3:23-24

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership (Day Four) The Fruit of a Changed Life: Conversions

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 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, turn around, change inwardly and turn away. The New International Version (NIV) translates the Greek word change.

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 by turning away from 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.”⁶

41. 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?

42. Write your personal testimony (proof) including what your life was like before Christ, how you met Christ and how your life has changed. This should be a short version that could be given in 30-60 seconds. 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.

⁶ Butler, Trent, Holman Bible Dictionary, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1991, p. 293.

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." Matthew 28:18-20

43. Read Matthew 28:18-19. Jesus said, "All _____ in _____ and on _____ has been _____ to me. Therefore go and _____ of all _____ baptizing them in the _____ of the _____ and of the _____ and of the _____ and teaching them to _____ I have commanded you.

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. Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth and He is giving you authority to make disciples. A disciple was a student or pupil who would learn and follow his master's teachings and pass 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. John 16:7-11

44. 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 is the One who moves hearts to confess and repent of their sins.

Read Romans 10:13-17 and answer questions 45-47:

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. Romans 10:13-17

45. Who has sent you to make the gospel known (proclaim, preach)?

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

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

Look at the word “preaching” in verse 14. Earlier I used the word “preaching” negatively to mean giving out moral advice in an obnoxious or forceful manner. The word came to have this unflattering definition because some men 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).

Personal Application:

48. 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 Five) 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 living in and for Christ.

IV. Praise: Praising God

Read Hebrews 13:15 and answer questions 49-50:

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

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

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

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 or she is active in the Kingdom sowing (planting 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.

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

51. Read Mark 4:26-29. What is Jesus telling us in this parable about God partnering with us?

We are responsible for obeying God by sowing seeds into the fruits of *character, deeds, converts* and *praise*. God is responsible for the resulting crop. Sometimes the fruit trees seem bare, but that does not necessarily mean that are or that they will remain so.

There are many saints who have worked long and challenging years in Jesus and saw no results. William Carey, born in England in 1761, sailed to India to win souls and labored **7** years before having his first convert. While in India, his first wife experienced mental illness before her death. Although friends encouraged him to place her in an asylum, he refused and kept her at home.

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. And most definitely he 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 25 years before God blessed him with his son Isaac.

52. 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 sprouted (developed) 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 supposed to have but did not. In the same way, there are folks who look like Christians but are not. They are counterfeiting (faking it) being fruitful just as the fig tree had done with its green, lush leaves but no figs.

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. Technology has also advanced communication and transportation systems. 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 the believer and nonbeliever (Matthew 5:45).

Take care not to get “caught up” in the resources or the programs for the increase of fruit but stay grounded in Jesus. Remember that leadership is about our relationship with God and our relationship with others. Ultimately this 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. Sometimes connections are difficult, sometimes easy, but God is always in control.

Personal Application:

53. 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 summary of what God showed you and how you obeyed:

- End Lesson 3 -

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Lesson 3
CLI Leadership Study: Fruit and Leadership

Name: _____ ID Number: _____ Date: _____

Name of Institution: _____ Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

1. Why can we trust God’s words? _____

2. Since God declares His love for you, do you expect Him to act in your behalf (benefit)?
Yes No Maybe (Circle One) Explain your answer:

3. 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? Why or Why not?

4. Now imagine yourself as a bowl of fruit. Picture what people see when they look at you. Consider what flavors they would taste in talking with you. Reflect on how others would rate the way that you treat them. Ask God for one thing you can do to improve your character so that you can connect with more people. Write what God tells you and how we may pray for you:

5. When Jesus says that He is the vine (grape vine), is He speaking figuratively or literally? (Circle Answer)

6. What kind of fruit is Jesus talking about: figurative or literal? (Circle One)

7. Are you able to live a fruitful life apart or separated from Jesus Christ? Yes No (Circle One)

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

9. What does abiding or living in Christ mean to you?_____

10. How are you going to remain, dwell and live in Christ?_____

11. Personal Application: Read and meditate on John, chapter 15. While meditating on this passage, ask the Lord Jesus for a fruitful assignment to honor Him. Please share how the Lord

directed you and what happened: _____

12. List the fruit of the Spirit: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____

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

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

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

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

17. Read Proverbs 4:23. How will you guard your heart? _____

18. Read and meditate on Philippians 1:10-11. What is God telling you about the “fruit of character?” _____

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

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

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

22. God was with Jesus; is He with you? Yes No Maybe (Circle One) Why or Why not?

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

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

25. Read Job 38-42 in your Bible. What are at least two things that these chapters tell you of God's righteousness? _____

26. How could you help someone who feels that life or circumstances are not right or fair

(Job 38-42 & Isaiah 55:8-9)? _____

27. Read Philippians 1:11. Who is the source of your righteousness? _____

28. 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 (Circle one) Explain.

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

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

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

32. Why did God condemn sin in sinful man (v.4)? _____

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

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

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

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

37. Read 1 John 1:9-2:1. As a believer what action are you supposed to take if you sin?

38. Read Acts 26:20. Paul says that he preached to Jews and Gentiles alike that after they had repented that they should prove their _____ by their _____

39. Mathew 6:1-2 and Matthew 5:15-16 seem to be in direct opposition to each other. Explain how a Christian leader is careful not to do righteous acts before men and let men see your deeds?

40. Write your memory verse without looking at Colossians 3:23-24:

41. 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?

42. Write your personal testimony (proof) 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 30-60 seconds. Different circumstances may call for a fuller and more complete story.

43. Read Matthew 28:18-19. Jesus said, “All _____ in _____ and on _____ has been _____ to me. Therefore go and _____ of all _____ baptizing them in the _____ of the _____ and of the _____ and of the _____ and teaching them to _____ I have commanded you.”

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

45. Who has sent you to make the gospel known (proclaim, preach)? _____

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

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

Describe the Spirit’s leading and result: _____

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Next: Lesson 4 - The Presence of God

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