

Learning to Yield

Introduction

The Lord has called each of us to His work. The work was prepared before hand for us from the foundation of the world. However, the real problem for the Lord is the lack of workers. He even told us to pray for the Lord to send workers to the fields. The shortage of workers is due to the lack of qualified workers—those who have been prepared by the Lord for the work. That is the goal of the process of change that this series has discussed. The end result of the process is a qualified worker ready to go to work.

To become a qualified worker for the Lord we have to become free from all entanglements of the world, the world systems, and our old nature. Jesus gave us the details of how this occurs.

John 8:31-32 NASB

- (31) So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, *then you are truly disciples of Mine;*
- (32) *and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.*"

It starts with believing and ends with being free. Freedom is the objective of the process. We have to become free in order to be able to follow the Spirit and do what the Lord requires of us. After believing we are to become disciples by continuing in His word. (A disciple is a continuer. If you are not continuing in the word, you are not a disciple.) By continuing in the word as a disciple, we come to know the truth (the root word also means "reality"). As we walk in truth, the real reality, then we are made free by the truth that has been applied to our lives. We are now able, because we are free, to be obedient to the Lord.

One of the hardest areas in which to become free is in the area of family. Our natural family ties are secondary to the Lord and His requirements. Jesus illustrated this for us when His natural family wanted to speak to Him while He was speaking to the crowds. He clearly indicated that the spiritual family has a priority; that is, as long as the spiritual family is doing the will of God.

Matthew 12:46-50 NASB

- (46) While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him.
- (47) Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You."
- (48) But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "*Who is My mother and who are My brothers?*"
- (49) And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "*Behold My mother and My brothers!*"

(50) "For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."

Jesus brought a sword, the sword of the word, that cuts between the natural and the spiritual including our relationships and especially those that are closest.

Matthew 10:34-36 NASB

(34) "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

(35) "For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW;

(36) and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD.

We must be free from the bondage of family as well as other bondages. Your family does not determine your spiritual walk with the Lord.

There are two problem areas in our lives that dramatically effect us and our freedom objective. These are incorrect ideas and incorrect practices. Many of our incorrect ideas deal with the character of God. These must be dispelled and we must come to understand that God intends us good and not harm. When we undergo the discipline of God it appears that He intends our harm but that is incorrect. Look at what we said in the last lesson about Job. At first it appeared that God was allowing the enemy to harm Job but in the end it was clear that God intended all that happened to be for Job's good.

We make things easier for ourselves when we learn how to yield to the discipline of God and the maturing process of the Lord.

A Change of Mind

Qualifying as a worker for the work of the Lord involves both a negative and a positive, a putting off and a putting on.

Ephesians 4:1 NASB

(1) Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

Ephesians 4:17 NASB

(17) So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

Before knowing the Lord, we walked and lived our lives just as the heathen do in the futility of our minds. We lived with all sorts of impurities and sensuality, pursuing greediness and operating in the darkness of our mind. We can no longer do that. We must learn to walk and live in a way that is worthy of our calling. This involves light coming into our darkened understanding revealing the hidden things of our heart that are hindering us from pursuing the fullness of God's plan and purpose for our lives and His work.

Ephesians 4:20-24 NASB

- (20) But you did not learn Christ in this way,
- (21) if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,
- (22) that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,
- (23) and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,
- (24) and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

We learn Christ by hearing Him and being taught by Him because the truth is in Jesus. This allows us to put off our old self and put on our new self.

We are to have the same attitude that Jesus had.

Philippians 2:5-8 NASB

- (5) Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,
- (6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
- (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.
- (8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus did not grasp at equality with God but instead yielded to the purpose of the Father and emptied Himself. This is opposite of what the Devil did. He grasped at being equal with God and fell in his rebellion. In our fallen nature we operate like the Devil, grasping for the things that we desire. We have to put off our grasping nature and put on our yielding nature.

Jesus emptied himself of His own will, His own glory, His own position. We must have the same attitude and empty ourselves of our own will, our position, our glory. That is the put off part. Then become an obedient servant. That is the put on part.

We are dealing with opposites—grasping or yielding. Our old nature is given to grasping and striving. This was the problem in Corinth—striving, envy, carnality, walking like unbelievers walk—grasping positions, authority, the best seats, etc.

Receiving More Grace

If we follow the pattern and attitude of Jesus we will receive more grace. Grace is better than faith, better than knowledge. We all need all of the grace that we can receive. Peter, who is an expert on this subject, tells us how to receive more grace in his first epistle. It begins with us exhibiting humbleness toward one another. If we are being conformed to the likeness of Jesus, then the Father expects to see humbleness in us just as it was in Jesus.

1 Peter 5:5 NASB

- (5) You younger men, likewise, be subject to *your* elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

Again, we are looking at opposites. Pride will cause God to oppose us; but humility, humbleness, will cause God to give more grace to us.

Sometimes we don't realize how important this is because we have been taught a rather meaningless definition of grace—the “unmerited favor of God”. That definition doesn't tell us anything about grace. A good, practical definition of grace would be “the enablement of God to do what we can't do ourselves”. Pride enables us through the flesh and our natural abilities. Grace enables us through Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. One is sourced in us and the other is sourced in God.

The process of yielding is the process of humbling. In our society we have the concept of “fairness”. This is especially true in the United States. We rail against things that we think are unfair. Did God ever say that He would deal with us in a way that fits our concept of fair? The concept of being fair comes out of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is a part of the Adamic nature. In the Lord there is no concept of fair nor not fair. Whatever God wants is fair whether we think it is fair or not. This becomes a problem if our motives and intents of our heart are not right.

A good example of this is the parable of workers hired at end of the day.

Matthew 20:1-14 NASB

- (1) "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.
- (2) "When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.
- (3) "And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place;
- (4) and to those he said, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And so they went.
- (5) "Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing.
- (6) "And about the eleventh *hour* he went out and found others standing *around*; and he *said* to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day long?'
- (7) "They *said* to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He *said* to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.'
- (8) "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard *said* to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last *group* to the first.'
- (9) "When those *hired* about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius.
- (10) "When those *hired* first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius.
- (11) "When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner,
- (12) saying, 'These last men have worked *only* one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.'

(13) "But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?'

(14) 'Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.'

It didn't seem fair to the ones who had worked all day that those who had worked only an hour would receive the same amount of money. Either the hour workers should have received less or the day workers should have received more. It didn't seem fair.

The moment we say that it is not fair, we have stepped out of the spirit and into the flesh. We are basing our judgment on Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and not on the judgment of the Spirit.

We receive a new nature that develops in us a new character that results in new actions. As we are transformed by the renewing of our minds, we develop a new attitude and learn a new way to think that is free from the world's ways.

Our attitude reflects our character. There are two aspects of our character—our inherited traits and our acquired traits. Some of our traits come through our genetic makeup; however, many if not most are acquired from our environment as we grow up. The process of change allows these traits to be dealt with by the Lord.

Steps to Yielding to Change

Let's sum up this series of lessons by listing the steps yielding to the maturing process.

1. Seek the lord about our problem attitude, the one the lord wants to deal with.
2. Seek the root of the problem. Since there are two aspects to our character—inherited and acquired traits—we need to know which type we are dealing with since the way that each is handled is different.
3. Look in the word. The word will set us free. The antidote to ignorance and bondage is truth. We have to learn what to put off, what to put on and what to put to death. Some things are not changeable—they must be put to death. (see Colossians 3:5-8) We put to death the works of the flesh—these are primarily body desires. We put off soulish things—these involve other people primarily. Then, we put on the replacements—these also relate to people, our interaction with believers.

We can only put on by faith. At first it will seem like we are being a hypocrite or that we are fooling ourselves. We build the form by our actions and in faith expect God through His grace to make the substance real. An example of this is the pouring of concrete—build a form that will contain the concrete in the proper shape until it hardens, then the form is removed because the substance is now real. So, we put on in faith expecting to see the substance become a reality.

A good example of yielding and not resisting is in Genesis 13 and the story of Abraham and Lot. God had blessed them so that each had large herds and many shepherds. Strife and contention arose between the two groups of shepherds over the water holes and was creating problems.

Genesis 13:8-9 NASB

- (8) So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers.
- (9) "Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me; if *to* the left, then I will go to the right; or if *to* the right, then I will go to the left."

Abraham didn't enter into the strife by trying to put Lot and his shepherds in "their place". Instead, he yielded to God's purpose. (Remember, Abraham was there because God had told him to go there.) Abraham told Lot to choose which area he wanted and he would go the other way. "*Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, ... So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other.*" (Genesis 13:10-11 NASB)

Lot picked what looked the best to him. However, things were different with Abraham, who had humbled himself under the hand of God. Whereas Lot had lifted up his eyes for himself, God told Abraham where to look.

Genesis 13:14-15 NASB

- (14) The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward;
- (15) for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.

Notice that God told him to look at all four points of the compass. This covers everything that could be seen in every direction including all that Lot had chosen. So, by choosing to resolve conflict by yielding to the Lord, Abraham received it all.

God intends that all things work together for our good and we need to believe that and yield to the processes of the Lord.