



A QUESTION OF CHARACTER

LESSON 13

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WORD FOR THE JOURNEY

• **James 1:21-22** Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

• Doers: *poietai*: a performer; especially a poet

• Hearers: *akroatai*: those who listen without participation

• **LEARNING GOAL FOR THIS CLASS:**

Learning to hear God and respond to Him in such a way that His purposes can be fulfilled in us

We play an active role in the renewal of our minds

Spiritual warfare requires enemy reconnaissance

UNIQUELY GIFTED

- **Psalm 139:14-16** I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, *And* skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained *for me*, When as yet there was not one of them.
- **Romans 12:4-5** For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- Each person is unique
- Even people with the same giftings may not have the same

WORK TO DO

- **Ephesians 2:8-10** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
- We should work but not FOR salvation
- Salvation is a gift – not based on our work
- Once we are saved, we work in accordance with the will of God
- **2 Peter 1:2-3** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who **called** us by His own glory and excellence

FINDING GOD'S WILL

- Called: *kaleo*: to be invited out of a larger group
- This takes us back to our original verse for the journey:
 - **Romans 12:1-2** Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the **will** of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
- Will: *thelema*: desire; something set aside especially
- **John 1:12-13** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God

PEACE WITH GOD

- **Romans 5:1-2** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace **with** God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.
- The enmity-creating sin that separated us from God was removed by the sacrifice of Jesus
- The peace **of** God is an entirely different matter
- **Philippians 4:6-7** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- Guard: *phroureo*: a watcher in advance

TAKE UP YOUR CROSS

- **Matthew 16:24** Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.
- Deny: *aparneomai*: to disown, disregard, deny, put aside, forsake, renounce, reject, refuse, restrain, disclaim.
- Your cross is your purpose for living
- Jesus' cross was a literal one that fulfilled His reason for living on the earth
- **James 1:5-8** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, *being* a double-minded man, unstable in all his

OTHERS WHO BORE WITNESS

- **Hebrews 12:1-3** Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

WE ARE A WORK IN PROGRESS!

- **Philippians 1:6** *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

THE PERIL OF FRUITLESSNESS

• **Matthew 21:18-22** Now in the morning, when He was returning to the city, He became hungry. Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He said to it, "No longer shall there ever be *any* fruit from you." And at once the fig tree withered. Seeing *this*, the disciples were amazed and asked, "How did the fig tree wither *all* at once?" And Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen. And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

THERE SHOULD BE THE HOPE OF FRUIT

• **Hebrews 13:15** Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

STAND!

• **Philippians 3:13-16** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.

THERE IS NO NEUTRAL GROUND

• **Mark 9:38-40** John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw some-one casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to prevent him because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us

A LESSON LEARNED

- As we saw in the parable of the vine and branches, pruning increases the fruit production.
- While we consider successes in our lives, God often uses adversity to prune away things that aren't really important
- **Hebrews 12:9-11** Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.
- Seeing discipline or hardship as good things requires a trust in God; it requires being in good standing with Him

ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

- **Hebrews 12:12-17** Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that *the limb* which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that *there be* no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.
- **VERSE 12** is an imperative. DO IT!