

Spiritual Growth Series

Class 1: The Learner's Heart

Prepared by Eric Smith - September 15th, 2009

How and why we learn. The attitude of maturing and growing. Maturing to a stronger commitment to Christ. Loving and holding fast to the word. What Jesus practiced and taught about learning.

Practical Practices

- Be Prepared to take notes
- Notes should be Scripture reference and either a highlight, or something you want to study further.
- Plan to set aside time to review, study out more, and internalize the class.
- Plan to be responsible for all the classes
- Plan to hold yourself accountable

Introduction

- The Learner's Heart
- What are we called to? Discipleship. The "followship" of Jesus.
- To the rich young ruler Jesus said sell everything you have and follow me. We are saved by grace, but that is only the *beginning*, not the end of salvation! **Philippians 2:5-12** says our attitude should be the same as Jesus, a humble, obedient servant bringing glory to God -- and it is in that context that Paul encourages the church to continue to work out its salvation with fear and trembling. Not out of guilt, but out of awe of God who works in us according to his purposes!
- What purposes?
- We are united in Christ in our purpose to please Him, worship Him, and magnify His name by bringing the knowledge of Him to others, but we are all unique. We will all hear a lesson, but each person will hear it according to his own uniqueness.
- This also brings glory to God, because we each have to learn in a way that is intimate between you and God.
- Learning really is about the heart

A Learners Heart is A Willing Heart

- **Mark 2:13-17** - Compare the two hearts we see here:
 - There was a large crowd that Jesus taught.
 - Later at Levi's house were not only the "sinners" but many who followed him. The feeding of the 5000 had not happened yet, so it was not just food they were after. The last thing they were at was the lake, where Jesus was teaching. They wanted more!

- Compare that to the Pharisees, who couldn't get past the form (dining with sinners) to actually hear the content of Jesus' message. They didn't even go to Jesus directly!
- How can we be like Pharisees today?
- Jesus drives the point home in **vs. 21, 22** - We have to have a continually renewed heart in order to continually learn from the Word.
 - We can never settle in our ways and accept religiosity
 - We can never get complacent, or settle for methods and rules in place of zeal and passion for God.
 - leads right into...

A Learners Heart is An Amazed Heart

- **Mark 1:21** - They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law
 - People were amazed at Jesus' teaching because His teaching was amazing!
 - What do you think indicated that Jesus taught with authority?
 - Passion? Urgency? Responsibility? Joy?
 - The very ways that Jesus taught ought to be the ways we learn!
- **Mark 1:27, 28** - **Look at the outcome of an amazed heart :**
The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him." News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.
 - ***A Learners heart is compelled to share what it has learned!***
- **Mark 4:13-20** - The Word is no less amazing now than when you first heard it!
 - People have a very natural desire to learn - as shown in the shallow soil
 - The seed sown is the same throughout - the nature of the Word is unchanging - what changes? We do. Our circumstances, etc...
 - Recall when you first studied the Bible. How does your study compare now? If it is not still "amazing" ask why? What might be those "other things"? A good test is, when you sit down and have a quiet moment, do you reach for your Bible, or "other things"?
 - Other things may not be bad things per se... (share about going on the computer to check the news in the morning, **OR** a quiet time...)
- **2 Peter 1:3-9** - "...add to goodness, knowledge..." -- we need to continually add by learning. We will either be amazed at the **Word**, or replace it with amazement of the **world**...
- The only way we'll continue to learn is to remember who we are in relationship to God and that a...

A Learners Heart is a Humble Heart

- **Mark 1:35** - **Learn Like Jesus did**
Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere

else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

- "Everyone is looking for you..." - Jesus had to plan and guard His time with the Father. If this is how Jesus approached His time with God, how ought we approach our time in the Word?
- **Proverbs 9:9** - Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.
 - Is there anyone you are accepting instruction from? If not, why not?
- **Proverbs 13:20** - He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.
 - In sports you play with those better than you to improve. Do you seek out time from women you consider more spiritual than yourself? If not, why not?
- Note that Jesus' time here preceded the action of going to other nearby towns to preach the message.
- Humble learning prepares us for the fact that...

A Learners Heart will be a Tested Heart

- **Mark 1:12, 13** - Jesus was tested in the desert.

At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Jesus was tested, but the testing itself was a learning exercise in preparation for the kind of reliance upon God He would need throughout His ministry and the trust He would need at the cross -- the *real* test!

- **Mark 6:37** - The disciples by this time had seen a numerous healings, raise someone from the dead, and exert control over nature. Now, in the case of the feeding of the 5000, He tells the disciples to feed them! The reason for us to learn, is to prepare to **act** on what we're learning!
 - Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, whose eyes were opened, God enables us to learn for a purpose. Let that sink in.
 - As you study and learn, always consider how you will put into practice what you are learning
 - **Eph 2:10** - For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
 - Good time to share about Ryan's expecting to get up to bat and just "be" great!

Recap

- A Learner's heart is an open heart
- A Learner's heart is an amazed heart
- A Learner's heart is a humble heart
- A Learner's heart will be a tested heart

Memory Scriptures:

- **Proverbs 9:9** - Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.
- **Mark 1:22** - The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.