

CONTINUING THE “GREEN LETTERS”

FALL : 2023 - SPRING: 2024

CHAPTER 44, pg. 191-194

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CAUSE AND EFFECT

Lu 10:38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.

42 "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

(NKJV)

Contrast the “many things” of verse 41 with the “one thing” of verse 42? What was Martha’s concern?

Only one thing was needed and Mary chose that good part. What did she choose that was good and needful?

Because Mary chose the good and needful part, Jesus said it would not be taken away from her? Why would it not be removed from her? Could Martha’s service be removed from her? How?

We are called to be “witnesses.” What is the witness of the two women? What did they show to others was of great importance and value to them?

Joh 15:7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

8 "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.
10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.
11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. (NKJV)

What is the requirement that Jesus lays down here to be a good, fruit-bearing disciple?

What does this requirement look like in everyday living?

If we do the required action Jesus told us to do, what will be the immediate effect?

How is answered prayer (v. 7) the same as "much fruit" in verse 8?

What causes the effect of being His disciples?

What is the difference between producing fruit and bearing fruit?

LAW OF THE FRUIT TREES

Le 19:23 'When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. It shall not be eaten.

Le 19:24 'But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD.

Le 19:25 'And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I am the LORD your God.

When the Israelites entered the promised land and settled it, they were to plant trees for the fruit that could be produced by them. When could they eat the fruit of the trees? Why?

What does this teach us about our lives and God's expectations?

CHAPTER 44 - SERVICE AND RECKONING pp. 199-202

What is the difference between these two statements:

"...the barrenness of a busy life."

"Barrenness of life produces busyness."

What is the difference between “working FOR the LORD” and “working WITH the LORD.”?

What does the author (of TCGL) say is the motivation for the most part of those whose emphasis is service?

“We must all learn, sooner or later, that the result of every form of self-effort is nothing but a barren waste, a spiritual Death Valley.” What does this mean?

*Read and retell this account: Deuteronomy 1:34-46
Why was the LORD angry with them? What does this teach us about self-effort?*

*Read and retell this account: Leviticus 10:1-3
What did they do that was wrong? How serious was this to the LORD?*

*Why didn't Jesus expect His disciples to be disciple-makers immediately? Why did He not tell them to go make disciples?
Mr 1:17 Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (NKJV)*

“...when growth in Christ is given first place, service will never suffer.” What does this mean? How can we know when we are in the place to grow in Christ? What will that look like?

At EBC, which is a very average church, we see people all the time who get so busy “serving the Lord” they have no time to grow in Christ, are never in Bible studies anymore, and even when joining a group of other believers are not committed to growth with the group but instead only want as much “training” and “doctrine” as will make them “better servants in what they have chosen to do.” For them, the rest of that academic stuff is of no real value. He does not what God's purpose for him is!

Discuss this: “Our Father's ultimate purpose in saving us is that we might be conformed to the image of His Son, not simply to keep us out of hell and get us into heaven. We have been born into Christ that He may BE our LIFE, not just our Savior.”

The life of the church and of every believer is the Holy Spirit. That is God's union-maker with Christ and the Father. In union with Him, we are in union with Christ and Their purpose is identically the same - to make Jesus the focus and center of our lives and to make us just like Him. "When we realize that we have been born into the Lord Jesus so that His life "might be made manifest in our mortal flesh," our heart hunger is brought into harmony with that of the Spirit for us: "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "Our burden for ourselves and others will be the same as the Holy Spirit place on Paul's heart" when he spoke of the burden of his heart was that Christ be formed in you.

When we try to serve the Lord by DOING without BEING we are inadequate to bear fruit. We are trying by self-effort to produce an imitation of the true and it cannot work. This leads us to frustration and either the hypocrisy of thinking we are doing well because we are busy doing the things we have decided God ought to be pleased with or to the inner knowledge of everything we do being useless. In this latter frame of mind, we get bummed out because we are not appreciated enough for our sacrifices or simply "burned out" with no energy left to do more of the same old empty stuff. This is used by God since, "we are quietly being taught and trained by the Sprit through failure." "...but the patient Holy Spirit finally enables us to face up to the fact that WE are the hindrance."

It is through the witness of those who have been with Jesus in a personal growing relationship, that others hear of and are convicted about this same Lord Jesus. To be that witness you must have been with Him enough to know of what you speak. If you have no relationship, you are little more than an ideologue, religious salesman looking for another decision to buy your unknown product. Until people understand the need for the person you know intimately, they will not understand why they should leave their cultural way of life to adopt your untested one or one that has been shown through time to be mishandled by people who did not know Him but knew the politics and cultural changes they wanted.