

CLOSE TO THE MASTER

Scripture

John 15:1-6

Acts 15:26

Introduction

The basic prerequisite to successful Christian living is that we live close to the Master. It takes more than a casual introduction to Jesus to produce 'Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ'. It demands all out dedication--total commitment--to Christ and his purposes. It demands the emptying of selfish motivations and allowing Christ to become our motivating force.

These men that had hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ had learned that Christ is:

I. The source of all life

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John 10:10

He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

I John 5:12

A. Physical life

1. In creation

Genesis 1-3

2. In raising the dead

a. Lazarus

John 11

b. Son of the widow of Nain-Luke 7

3. In the resurrection

B. Spiritual life

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Romans 8:2, 6

I. The source of all life

B. Spiritual life

1. Christ, the true vine

I am the true vine, and my Father
is the husbandman.

John 15:1

2. Believers are branches of the vine

I am the vine, ye are the branches.

John 15:5

3. Abiding, essential to life

If a man abide not in me, he is cast
forth as a branch, and is withered;
and men gather them and cast them into
the fire and they are burned.

John 15:6

II. The source of fruition

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch
cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide
in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide
in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches. He
that abideth in me and I in him, the same
bringeth forth much fruit: for without me
ye can do nothing.

John 15:4-5

A. Abiding, essential to fruition

(See scripture above)

For without me, ye can do nothing.

John 15:5

B. Prayer, the master key of life and fruition

If ye abide in me, and my words abide
in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and
it shall be done unto you.

John 15:7

1. Prayer appropriates spiritual strength

a. Christ in the garden

b. Christ, the great intercessor

(John 17)

GOD IS NOT SATISFIED WITH MAINTAINING
THE STAGNANT QUO. HE DEMANDS GROWTH
AND FRUITION

III. Purging essential to increased fruition

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

John 15:2

- EX:
VINE IN
BACKYARD
AT 912
ESPANOLA
- A. Christian life not without problems
 - 1. Even Christ had problems
 - 2. Paul was confronted by many trials
 - 3. You are not immune to problems because you are a Christian
 - B. Hazarding your life makes you more fruitful
 - 1. Because you must forget self
 - 2. Because you must depend on Christ

For me to live is Christ, to die is gain.

Philippians 1:21

- C. Purging made Paul unconquerable
 - The soldier says, "Paul, we're going to flail you!"

He replies, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Romans 8:18

The soldier replies, "Well then, we're going to behead you."

"Wonderful," Paul exclaims, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain."

Philippians 1:21

- 1. In thought
- 2. In word
- 3. In deed

- 1. Would not sell his virtue for a passing gain
- 2. Could not be placed in chains
- 3. His reputation made him free of all