

“STEPS TO SPIRITUAL SUCCESS”

Big Idea . . . Part 2: Accept the Master’s Mission

John 15:1-8, 11

INTRO: Back to Series picture (Jn. 15:1-8, 11). John 13-17 . . . Jesus is the Vine (life source). Our heavenly Father is the Vinedresser (Gardener, Caretaker). We Christians are the branches bearing fruit. Some branches are fruitful and productive while others are less fruitful and more barren, like we are as Christians (Matt. 13:3-9, 18-23). In John 15:1-8 Jesus presents the Steps to Spiritual Success which is bearing fruit that glorifies God and results in our experiencing real joy (vv. 8, 11). It is the overflowing abundant life Jesus refers to (Jn. 10:10).

Step 1 is to ACCEPT the Master’s MISSION to glorify God (Jn. 17:1, 4))

No need to have an identity crisis as to who we are and why we are here. We are branches bearing fruit to glorify God. This is the theme. Almost every NT writer tells us “to Him be glory forever”: Paul (Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 10:31), John (Rev. 1:6; 5:13), Peter (1 Pet. 4:11; 2 Pet. 3:18), Jude 25.

WHY DO WE GLORIFY GOD (Master’s Mission)

- He *created* us. We exist because of Him. Before two adults produced us, He created us (Psa. 100:3; 139:13-16; Isa. 43:1-7); Rom. 11:36 . . . He deserves glory because He gave us being (Ph. 1:20).
- He made *everything* to declare His glory: Pro. 16:4; Psa. 19:1; Isa. 43:20; Lk. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9.
- It’s Why Jesus came (Jn. 1:14; 17:1, 4; 13:31; 14:13; 1 Pet. 4:11).
- He *Judges* all who fail to declare His glory (Exo. 14:17; Rom. 1:18-23; Jer. 13:15-17; Rev. 14:6-7).

HOW DO WE GLORIFY GOD? Actually, we can’t give Him glory (intrinsically He has), but we can declare His glory. Variety of ways:

- through *salvation* – to receive Christ is to give God glory (Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:12-14; 2 Cor. 4:15)
- by *aiming* our life at declaring His glory (1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Pet. 4:11; Jn. 8:50). We choose to sacrifice self-glory for His. We choose Him over all else (money, fame, power, position, success, family, etc.). It’s one thing to advance God’s glory, another to aim for it.

- by *seeking to know and do His will*. Content to do His will (Matt. 26:39-42; Jn. 21:18-19). Discontentment robs God of His glory.
- by *living by faith* and trusting Him to take care of us (Rom. 4:20). God is glorified when we trust Him. This is true contentment. (Ph. 4:10-11).
- a *willingness to suffer* for Him (Psa. 69:9) – I hurt when He is dishonored (1 Pet. 4:14-16).
- *confessing* our sins glorifies Him (Josh. 7:19) – not begging for His forgiveness but accepting our responsibility. Never blame God for your sin (Gen. 3:12).

Note: Many other ways to glorify God: forgive, be thankful, pray, generosity, sexual purity, living honorably among unbelievers, praise and worship, etc.

- BEARING FRUIT glorifies God (Jn. 15:8). This is our focus in this series: Bearing fruit allows the world to see the results of a God-filled life. His/our MISSION? to glorify God and to joy in Him forever (vv. 8, 11).

True spiritual success is possible. There is an overflowing and abundant life that is rightfully ours as His branches. But we must take this first step to accept His Mission to glorify Him (many ways). God wants us to have true joy – only comes as we glorify God. This is the MORE of life in Christ that too many are missing. It is ours to have, if we are willing to take the necessary steps.

Parable of Talents (Matt. 25:14-30) . . . All who declare God’s glory are rewarded with joy and eternal rulership. All who refuse to declare His glory are cast into eternal darkness.

“Am I a reflection of His glory?” . . .

NEXT: Step 2: ADOPT the Master’s PLAN (the How). All in John 15. As we’ll study in our future lessons, there are five (5) keys that unlock the life that glorifies Him and results in lasting joy. Listen! If you’re struggling to have joy in your life, it’s because you’re having trouble declaring God glory!

1 Chron. 16:28-29 Read together . . .