

Discipline (the work prepared from the beginning)

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This message covers

- The 12 lessons Jesus revealed to us, from the beginning
- Jesus' disciplined good work of peace
- How our generation can grow in zeal for the Lord.

Information notice board

- 1) **About me.** Before I became a devoted Christian, I spent 20 years of my life being a hedonist – one who seeks pleasure for the sake of it, yet Love also brought pain! Since God humbled me to turn me into his servant and I got baptized in May 2017, he has enabled me to overcome sin ruling my life and to live by the Holy Spirit. You can read my full testimony [here](#):
- 2) **About these series.** The Lord Jesus gave me a single word “Blossom” as I was praying for a word for this season and series. This word will define a series of 12 topics he has also given me to tell his church about and build Christian character in his Holy Spirit. This lesson is one of those messages, but what does it mean to blossom?
- 3) **Pray for us!** Without the Lord, our effort is in vain. Pray that we remain faithful, humble servants.
- 4) **Subscribe to** our [YouTube Channel](#) and keep up with our videos which support the website.
- 5) **Looking for a ministry to partner with (pray, volunteer, give, subscribe to)? Consider supporting:**

<http://lighthousejersey.com>

Our mission: “Jesus told us in His “Great Commission” to “make disciples of all types of people all around the world.” We believe the best way to do this is to plant new small groups and Churches here, and around the world.”

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Start



Grow



Mature

Basics

Did you know that even if we know the end of the Christian journey: “A new heaven and a new earth, a new Jerusalem like a bride for her husband and no more tears, death, sorrow, pain”ⁱ the bible still expects a Christian to run their race in a very disciplined way? In fact it compares us to sportsmen like this:

“Therefore, I do not run without a definite goal; I do not flail around like one beating the air [just shadow boxing]. But [like a boxer] I strictly discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached [the gospel] to others, I myself will not somehow be disqualified [as unfit for service].”

1 Corinthians 9:26-27 AMP

You would think that knowing that you have been redeemed by the blood of the lamb and that your name is in the lamb’s book of life, you should simply relax and take it easy enjoying the grace of God. No! It is actually a lot more than that. Jesus the Christ who went before us expects his saints to be disciplined, in order to successfully complete their work – even if this work was already planned from the beginning of time.

Let me speak in the flesh for a moment. When a child is born, their DNA or their genes already contain all the instructions needed for them to grow into an adult for example their hair colour, the height they will achieve, the pitch of their voice, even perhaps how they will respond to certain situations, but this child, with assistance from their parents must work hard for these things to happen – and this requires hard work, it requires a clear and known goal – turning this dependent child into an independent adult.

Likewise in the spirit, when a Christian is first born again, the Spirit who brings this new birth has already given this “new born” Christian all the DNA of Christ in order for them to do the good work prepared for them from the beginning, but this Christian will need to get to know what their goal is and then start moving towards it. As this Christian is growing spiritually and doing good work, they will find that without exactly knowing how, they end up manifesting the fruit of the Spirit of Jesus. How does this happen? It’s in their spiritual DNA. What is this fruit? This 9-fold fruit is described as follows:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5: 22 -23 (NIV)

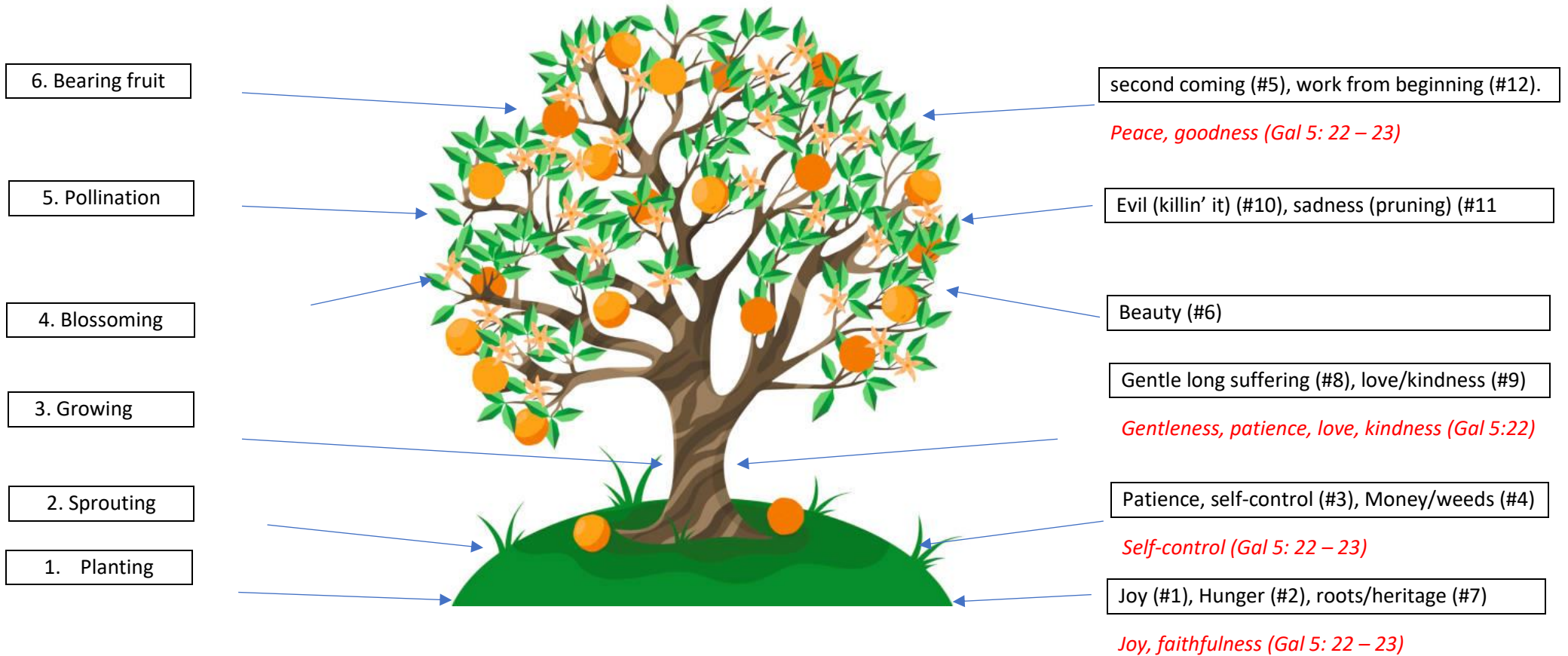
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[Now in these series of which this message is part 12](#), this being the last part we have been using an analogy of an orange tree growing to describe how a Christian matures in the Holy Spirit to the point of bearing lasting fruit. What the Lord, who is the Spirit however did in these series is build a 3 tiered work. He juxtaposed or knit together three things:

- *First* was understanding the **6 stages** an orange tree goes through from seed to bearing fruit. A process which takes 5 years.

- *Second*, was understanding the **9-fold fruit** of the spirit described in Galatians 5: 22 – 23.
- *Third*, was knitting them together into various **messages (#1-#12)** he gave me for his Church to mature in the Spirit filled life.

“Work from the beginning”.



This work he has given us and revealed to us, teaching us, just as he is teaching you is as follows:

1. **Planting** – you start with hunger (message #2), you are full of joy, irrespective of circumstances (#1) and your roots/heritage is firmly in Christ. We covered the fruit of *joy and faithfulness* in these lessons.
2. **Sprouting** – this is a delicate stage where little green shoots appear. Patience and self-control (#3) are needed. We also need to look out for Weeds which can choke. Money is such a weed (#4). We covered the fruit of *self-control* in these lessons.
3. **Growing** – this takes about 2-3 years and so is the longest stage. The ministry of psalms help in gentle longsuffering (#3) and you need love with kindness which are like sap - the life blood of a plant (#9). The fruit growing here are: *gentleness, patience, love and kindness*.
4. **Blossoming (Flowering)**. The flowering stage in oranges is very beautiful and these flowers attract bees and give off sweet smelling nectar. Spiritually, this beautiful stage can bring the dangerous sin of pride (#6). 99% of flowers fall to the ground and never bear fruit. Is this the same spiritually? Only God knows!
5. **Pollination**. This is a time of fertilisation - what allows fruit to be produced. Farmers prune in this period. Spiritual pruning done by God to his sons is discipline and often means hardship. In addition, the problem of evil in the world must be overcome by putting on Christ.
6. **Bearing Fruit**. Christ revealed himself to me and showed me that he wants Christians to bear fruit until his second coming, even during COVID (#5) and this means continuing the work from the beginning – the work he commissioned you to do (#12). The fruit of *peace and goodness* are in you.

Like an orange tree has one purpose – to bear fruit, each of us, has one purpose, a good work to do that God has prepared for us – one we do as “co – workers” with him. In this last message, the Lord wants us to learn about the fruit of goodness and peace.

And what does the fruit of the Spirit of Goodness and Peace look like?

As I meditated on these two-last fruits of the Spirit I came to a realisation or perhaps God gave me a revelation. The bible says that No one is good but God (Mark 10: 18) ⁱⁱand it also shows us none of us has true peace but that which Jesus gives us, not like the worldⁱⁱⁱ. It therefore follows that none of the 9 fold fruit of the Spirit can indeed be produced by a man on his own, it is an act of God alone. Many of the other fruit we covered in previous messages it was not exactly clear to me but these last two fruits make it clear that you can't fake the fruit it is a work of God alone. It is the Spirit that causes you to walk in virtue, in up rightness (goodness) and to be able to have inner peace even when the world is crying “wolf wolf” (peace)! The bible explains this further as follows:

First, it is God himself who chose you from the beginning – by means of his Spirit

“But we should and are [morally] obligated [as debtors] always to give thanks to God for you, believers beloved by the Lord, because **God has chosen you** from the beginning for salvation **through the sanctifying work of the Spirit** [that sets you apart for God's purpose] and by your faith in the truth [of God's word that leads you to spiritual maturity]. It was to this end that He called you through our gospel [the good news of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection],

so that you may obtain and share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold [tightly] to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.” **2 Thessalonians 2:13-15 AMP**

Second, it is God who does most of the growing, let us not boast – but do work with one purpose

“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters **have one purpose**, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.” **1 Corinthians 3:6-9 NIV**

Third, God works with us throughout our good work.

“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting comfort and encouragement and the good [well-founded] hope [of salvation] by His grace, **comfort and encourage and strengthen your hearts** [keeping them steadfast and on course] **in every good work and word.**” **2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 AMP**

Doing a good work is a disciplined process, perhaps like a growing orange tree.

But what is this good work the bible speaks of and what does it mean to be disciplined in it as this message covered? Jesus’ own example can make this clearer.

Examples from the bible: Jesus’ disciplined good work of peace

First, Jesus was anointed by the Spirit for his work

*“Then Jesus went back to Galilee **in the power of the Spirit**, and the news about Him spread through the entire region. And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised and glorified and honored by all.” Luke 4:14-15 AMP*

You therefore need to first get your seed from the Holy Spirit, it is he who gives the seed and waters it and makes it grow.

Second, even when crowds came, Jesus remained disciplined – he wasn't distracted from his purpose

*“When daybreak came, Jesus left [Simon Peter’s house] and went to a secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and [they] came to Him and **tried to keep Him from leaving them.** But He said, **“I must preach [the good news of] the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because I was sent for this purpose.”**” Luke 4:42-43 AMP*

Many of us are often get side tracked and forget our purpose - preaching good news, wherever God is sending us, not where we feel people want us.

Third, like Jesus we must remain disciplined in prayer – staying connected to God.

*“But the news about Him was spreading farther, and large crowds kept gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their illnesses. But **Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray [in seclusion].**” Luke 5:15-16 AMP*

Part of the good work includes being alone in the “wilderness” so you can pray. You can't do work without getting guidance, encouragement or God's rest.

Our generation: lacking in zeal, in goodness and in peace

Ours is a strange generation. We have social media tools with hundreds of followers on each – a captive audience, many of whom spend all their time online, waiting to hear from others.

Ours is a strange generation. We call Jesus “Lord Lord” but don't do what he did. Jesus called us to love our enemies but instead we call others, including our leaders: “Anti-Christ”. We are fierce lions online - trolling and attacking others with the keyboard sword of our phones and computers. Instead of pursuing peace with our fellow Christians we demonise those who for example “dare” to be democrats or progressives. We label them “baby killers” and “LGBTI queer lovers”. We love our prophets more than Christ, even when they prophesy lies. We esteem those with similar political leanings more than our brothers/sisters in the Lord. We write detailed defences of our political candidates whatever their moral flaws (“I support red, no I support blue”) more than we defend Christ. We have a form of zeal – but not for the Lord's house^{iv}.

Why can't we use our social media platforms to preach Christ crucified? Are we afraid of being reviled for our beliefs? Have we forgotten that the prophets were killed for his name? Have we forgotten that blessed are we when we are persecuted for his name's sake? Why do we love the praise of men more than the praise of God? With the way we love this world – our political parties, our wealth, our favourite sports team, can we do what our brethren before us did – leave all to catch men?

*“and so were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon [Peter]. Jesus said to Simon, “Have no fear; from now on you will be catching men!” After they had brought their boats to land, **they left everything and followed Him** [becoming His disciples, believing and trusting in Him and following His example].” Luke 5:10-11 AMP*

Jesus taught his disciples to “catch men”, our generation teaches others to “do a social gospel”. Let me explain this social gospel. You see a lot of us read correctly read about “social gospel” Jesus:

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.” Acts 10: 38

We then make our life’s work the “good” he did to right “injustice in society”. We feed the poor, visit the sick and those in prison, we fight against abortion.

BUT... this “good works”, good as they are, were however not the core of Jesus’ work. These things he did were likely an after effect of the power of God. Jesus came to deal with the core issue - the human heart which is full of sin. Agreed that many of these, for example feeding the poor can “open a great and effectual door” for preaching the gospel but let the focus of the time be to preach the Jesus of the bible and let the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) not be “mouths fed” but “gospel tracts distributed” “salvation cards, received”. Measuring the gospel effect shouldn’t be left to the evangelists, it should be for everyone in every area - this is the core focus.

Even the apostles (Acts 6: 1-4) refused to concentrate on “food distribution for widows” but they delegated this task to others^v - so that they could concentrate on preaching the word and prayer. So yes, there is room indeed for for that work, but the priority or goal or purpose of all Christians is preaching the gospel and praying and that’s what the leadership of any ministry, whatever its type should focus on as the priority for this was and still is Jesus’ work.

This great work requires discipline, like a boxer remaining focussed on his fight – not boxing the air in a waste of his strength.

It would also seem that Jesus did the good works he did (healing the sick, comforting the poor and the widows) – WHILE walking and preaching the gospel of peace. He went about preaching the kingdom of God and defended it against evil men who sought to defile it.

For our generation to do the good works prepared for us, we need to do like Jesus did, do the good works, but not neglecting the gospel, which is the core.

This is the work he called me to. The work he prepared for me from the beginning, which is this: *“Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand (Matthew 4: 16)”*

How does our generation start doing this good work of the gospel of peace?

True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin. Malachi 2: 6

The verse above indicates that to manifest this fruit:

1. You receive true instruction – which is the gospel of peace Jesus handed down from his apostles.
2. You walk with uprightness and in peace – exhibiting goodness
3. You do the work of turning people from sin – the good work the Lord’s instruction teaches you.

Jesus came to preach a gospel of repentance from sins and this is the work he calls you to, but this work requires discipline, so you are not side tracked.

In Ephesians 6: 11- 17, we are urged to wear the whole armour of God. Part of this armour is for your feet. Verse 15 says, “And with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.” Shoes are for moving (How beautiful are the feet which bring good news^{vi}). God expects us to go on the offensive and take the gospel of peace to others. First Peter 3:15 says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”^{vii}

So, what he told me; I tell you: “Go”! “Go and preach the good news about the Kingdom of God, the forgiveness of sin and repentance”.

See you next season, God bless you.

Amen.

Next steps

- To know the particular purpose of your calling, you will likely need to know your gifts. Watch the supplementary material on the Holy Spirit (starting with [part 1](#)) to help you understand the gifts of the Spirit which are given for equipping the saints for the work.
- Develop a list of things – those you need to STOP doing (distractions from the work) and those you need to START doing (core focus).

Let us pray.

How can I pray for you?

- You are a believer but have lost the original mission. You need the Lord's help to re-focus.
- You used to be a believer, but are a prodigal son/daughter. Nevertheless, the Lord is calling you back, saying "I haven't found your works to be perfect in the sight of my God"
- You have never received the gift of Christ, being eternal life and neither have you received his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit who gives you goodness and peace as a fruit.

Write to me so I can pray further for you: dwasake@shaweleroad.com Be blessed. END.

Notes

ⁱ See Revelation 21: 1-8

ⁱⁱ See Mark 10: 18

ⁱⁱⁱ See John 14: 27

^{iv} See Psalms 69: 9

^v See Acts 6: 1 - 4

^{vi} See Isaiah 52: 7

^{vii} Partially extracted from: [What is the readiness of the gospel of peace \(Ephesians 6:15\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)