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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 15:8
Lesson #6
Disciple of Christ
6/7/2026

1

What should we learn from the parable of The Prodigal Son?

Personally

As Disciples of Christ

TAKE OUR BAPTISM SERIOUSLY

The prodigal son - The nature of spiritual warfare.
The father - The power of pain & love.
The older brother - The danger of religiosity.

John 15:8

*“By this is my Father glorified,
that you bear much fruit,
and so prove to be my disciples.”*

2

Clarifying key words

1. **Disciple** - a **follower** of God at conversion / abiding.
2. **Apostle** - a person **sent** out as an ambassador from God / from the church.
3. **Justified** - **declared** holy, acceptable to God / man.
4. **Sanctified** - **holy, saint**, separate from defilement when converted / at spiritual maturity.
5. **Repent** - a **change** in thinking about identity, faith, and behavior at conversion / in facing sins.
6. **Baptism** - a **sign** gesture of repentance / indwelling Spirit of Christ.

3

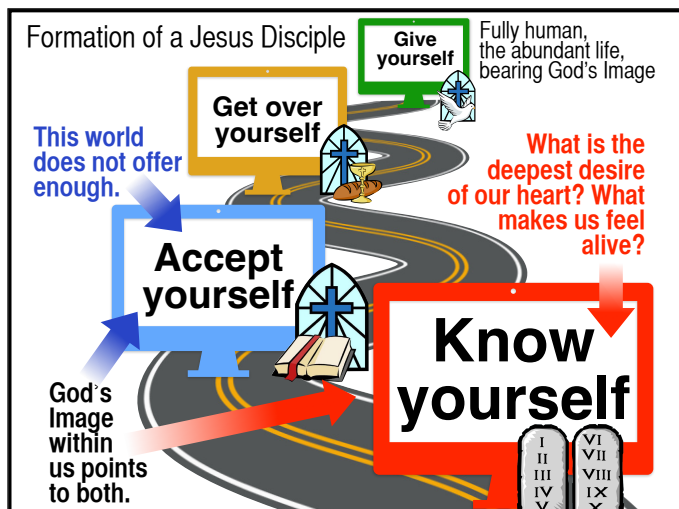
• **As Disciples of Christ**

The prodigal son - The nature of spiritual warfare.
The father - The power of pain & love.
The older brother - The danger of religiosity.

Take BAPTISM SERIOUSLY

1. The root issue is always about **US and GOD**, not us and them or it.
2. Don't **EXPECT GOD** to give us an “abundant life” in a distant land.
3. Faith, hope, and love are virtues, only when **PROPERLY PLACED**.

4



5

Knowing ourselves

1. What makes us **ANGRY** or **ANXIOUS**?
2. What makes us **FEEL ALIVE**?
3. How do we respond to **SUFFERING**?
4. What do we pray to God for?
5. Do we understand the Gospel?
 - Imputed righteousness?
 - The end of the Law Covenant?
 - Motivated by God's Grace & Love?
 - Expressing Grace & Love to others?

6

Ephesians 6

“11 Put on the full armor of God so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but ... the spiritual forces ... in heavenly places.”

- Helmet of **Salvation**
- Breastplate of **Righteousness**
- Belt of **Truth**
- Sword of the Spirit - the **spoken word** of God
- Shield of **Faith**
- Sandals of **Peace**

7

What are we to stand against in our spiritual warfare?

- ★ **The temptation is to try to fix the circumstances in “the distant land”.**
- ★ **We need to listen to our pain, anger, anxiety, and conscience as they lead us to the root of our soul’s desire.**

“In the end, dear friend, it is always between us and God, not between us and them.”

Mother Teresa

8

Spiritual warfare. **Take baptism seriously.**

Natural birth
Our old sin nature in Adam

Spiritual birth
Our new nature in Christ

9

John 17

“15 I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. 18 As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”

- **Political power** will not bring in God’s kingdom.
- **Sexual freedom** will not make us happier.
- **Military strength** will not give us security.
- **Christian laws** will not reform humanity.
- **Material prosperity** will not bring social peace / justice.
- **An educated world** will not bring humanity to its senses.
- **An rule dominated church** will not unify the Body of Christ.

10

Our FUNCTIONAL MESSIAH is that which makes us feel alive (secure, significant, serene)

For too many of us, Jesus is only a **FIGUREHEAD MESSIAH -**

- as we seek life in all the wrong places.

11

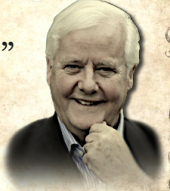
Some functional messiahs that may make us feel alive superficially.

Promising life apart from the Gospel

USA, justice, ministry, health, Bible study, friends, money, family, work, pleasure, social image, hobby, politics, sexual intimacy

12

“Conservative Christians have too often withdrawn from socio-political involvement. When they do engage the culture, they often place too much hope in politics.”




Os Guinness


13

What are we to stand against in our spiritual warfare?

★ **The temptation to be one dimensional.**



Marx
(detachment from the spiritual world)



Buddha
(detachment from the material world)

John 17:15-19

“Christ calls us to be in but not of this world.”

14

The cut flower ethics of moral secularism.

embracing the flower's glory (beauty)

while denying its basis (root)



beauty
beauty
ordered creation

15


Satan does not want to take away our faith, hope, and love.

He just wants to control the **object & domain** of our **faith, hope & love.**



16

Satan delights in our sensitivity to right and wrong so long as it leads no further than **fear, pride, vengeance, or depression.**



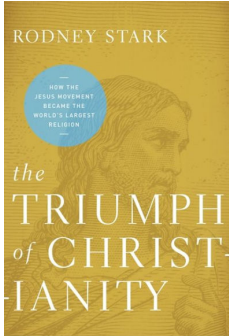
17

“Christianity spread not just among the poor who sought hope beyond the material suffering of this life but also among the rich who found that material wealth could not satisfy the soul.”

Christians are Anointed, Alien, Ambassadors in a distant land.


Rodney Stark

How the Jesus movement became the world's largest religion.



18


“Jesus made clear that the Kingdom of God is organic and not organizational. It grows like a seed and it works like leaven: secretly, invisibly, surprisingly, and irresistibly.”



Os Guinness

19

“If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth ‘thrown in’: aim at earth and you will get neither.”



Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis. (p. 134).

20

Prodigal Son



Next week
Colossians
1:28

**Making
Disciples of
all nations**

21