

Lesson 7  
The Test of Spiritual Leadership: Change

I. True change begins with the \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel, not the imperatives.

- We are regenerated by the Holy Spirit (born again)
- converted (through repentance and faith)
- forgiven (our debt of sin is paid in full by the blood of Jesus)
- imputed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ (His righteousness is credited to our account)
- justified (given a right legal standing before God)
- adopted (forever a member of God's family)
- and empowered by the Holy Spirit to understand and obey the Word of God.

A. Indicatives:

1. Who we \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ because of the incarnation, sinless life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

- i. Romans 1-11
- ii. Ephesians 1-3
- iii. Colossians 1-2

B. Imperatives:

2. How we should \_\_\_\_\_ in light of who we are in Christ.

- i. Romans 12-16
- ii. Ephesians 4-6
- iii. Colossians 3-4

II. The Law of the Rubber Band

Growth stops when you lose the \_\_\_\_\_ between where you are and where you should be.

Your capacity to grow will determine your capacity to \_\_\_\_\_.

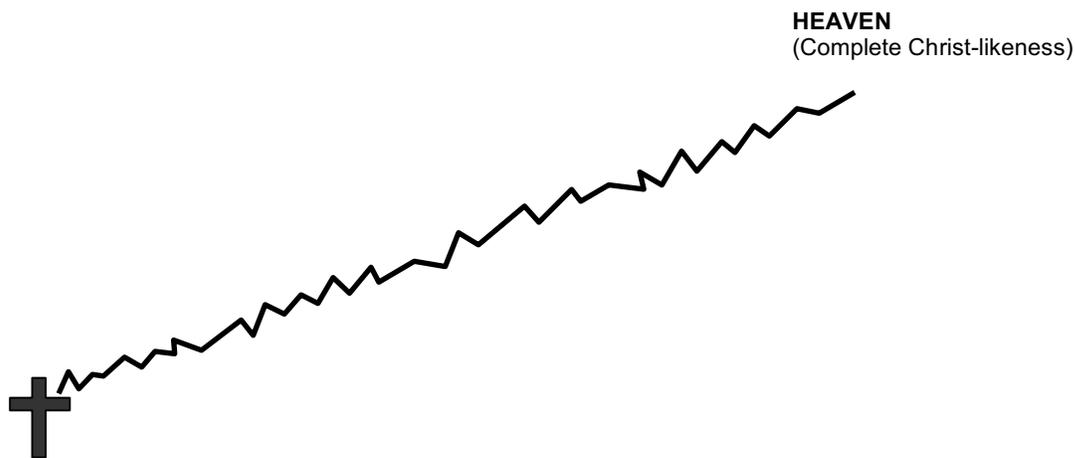
Philippians 3:7-14

### III. What was Christ's goal in saving Paul?

Romans 8:29: "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren."

God chose Paul, as He did all believers, to make him like Jesus Christ. That purpose for which God saved us is also the purpose for which we live.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 says, "It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Christian life is a lifelong pursuit of Christlikeness. That was the Lord's goal in saving Paul and was his goal in response.



Change: A life-long cycle of repentance, renewal, and \_\_\_\_\_ toward Christlikeness that will only be complete when believers meet the Lord in glory.

#### A. Obstacles to change

1. \_\_\_\_\_ – an attitude that assumes the status and position of God and refuses to acknowledge dependence on Him. 1 Peter 5:5-7
2. \_\_\_\_\_ – a focus on and desire to please self instead of a focus on and a desire to please God. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

#### B. Excuses to not change

1. "I can't. The temptation is too strong" – 1 Corinthians 10:13
2. "I thought that God just made change happen. I shouldn't have to work at it!" – 1 Timothy 4:7
3. "Why is God letting me go through all this?" – Romans 8:28-29

4. “My circumstances are the real problem, not me!” – Philippians 4:11-13

Martin Luther: “This life, therefore, is not righteousness but growth in righteousness; not health but healing; not being but becoming; not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it; the process is not yet finished but is going on. This is not the end but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory but all is being purified.”

- IV. Growth’s highest reward is not what we get from it, but what we \_\_\_\_\_ because of it.

2 Corinthians 3:18

Goal Conscious

Focus is on a destination  
 Motivates people  
 Goals are seasonal  
 Challenges people  
 When the goal is reached, we stop

Growth Conscious

Focus is on the journey  
 Matures people  
 Growth is lifelong  
 Changes people  
 When the goal is reached, we keep growing

- V. Homework:

1. Choose a Bible reading plan and follow it each day.
2. Memorize the Cornerstone weekly Bible verse (listed in the sermon outline each week). This week’s verse:

*“For the Lord’s anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning.”* Psalm 30:5

3. Married Men: Pray with your wife three times this week.

Single Men: Pray three times this week for the following:

1. To find your greatest joy in God.
  2. To be the spiritual leader God wants you to be.
  3. To influence others to know and worship God.
4. Evaluate your people skills. Ask those around you: Am I an encourager? What are ways I can encourage you? Am I thankful? How do I express my gratitude for others?

VI. Lesson 7 Discussion Questions

1. How have the past couple weeks gone? How are you doing with Bible reading, prayer (with wife if married), Scripture memory?
2. Why is it important to recognize that true spiritual change begins with the indicatives (realities of what Christ has done) of the gospel, not the imperatives (commands we are to obey)?
3. What is the Law of the Rubber Band? How is tension a good thing when it comes to change?
4. Why is change and growth necessary to be effective spiritual leaders?
5. What excuses have you made for not seeking to change and grow? What will you do differently and how will you do it?
6. How can we pray for you?