

Spiritual Growth Lessons

LESSON 9 of 32

♥ LOVING PEOPLE ♥

"Using things and loving people, That's the way it's got to be,
Using things and loving people, Look around and you can see,
That loving things and using people only lead to misery,
Using things and loving people, That's the way it's got to be.
Using things and loving people, Brings you happiness I've found,
Using things and loving people, Not the other way around,
'Cause loving things, and using people only lead to misery,
Using things and loving people, That's the way it's got to be.
(David Hall and Archie P. Jordan)

In previous lessons, we studied about God's love for us, and our love relationship with Him. That is the starting place, because we cannot love others as we ought to, if we do not have a right relationship with God.

In our last lesson, we saw the importance of self-love, so that we can forget ourselves and reach out to others around us with the true love of Jesus! But who are the people we are to love? Everybody! Especially those who are a part of your "world." Your home, your school, your working place, your next door neighbor, the postman, the grocer--the list goes on and on.

Many times we take many of these people for granted. We have been around them for a long time, yet have never shared Jesus Christ with them. Perhaps we even work with them side by side, and yet have never let the love of Jesus flow through us to touch them with the gospel of salvation. What are people for? To use only? No, we are to love everybody with the love of Jesus!

THE SECOND TOUCH

"And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking" (Mark 8:24). A blind man was brought to Jesus, and those who brought him begged Jesus to touch and heal him. That was the way Jesus normally healed people, but Jesus is God, and He has the right to do things anyway He chooses. Sometimes He does things different just to remind us that He is God!

Jesus, being every bit a gentleman in His behaviour, and not wanting to embarrass the blind man with what He was about to do, took him by the hand and led him out of town. Then He spit on the blind man's eyes, and putting his hands upon him asked him what he saw. The answer was quite startling to say the least. The man was not fully healed. He answered, "I see men as trees, walking." How shocked the disciples of Jesus must have been at the apparent "power failure" of Jesus. But it is obvious that Jesus does all things for a reason--in this case, to teach us a valuable lesson! Jesus touched the man a second time, and he saw all men clearly. He needed a second touch.



When you and I were filled with the precious Holy Spirit of God, a beautiful river of love began flowing from our life. We loved everybody. We wanted to share Jesus with everybody we came in contact with. We had not memorized many Bible verse.

Perhaps we were not even sure just exactly what we believed. But we were sure of the reality of Jesus Christ, whose love flooded our hearts. Nobody had to ask us to witness. The compelling force was the love of God within us.

That is the way it is supposed to be--not just in the beginning of our walk with God, but all the time. If we have somehow lost that first love, if we no longer see the multitudes about us as lost souls that need Jesus, then we need a second touch--we need a fresh refilling of the Holy Ghost!

One of the most powerful verses in the Word of God concerning our "obligation" to witness is this one: *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"* (Acts 1:8).

For years I had been beating people over the heads with the second "ye shall" in the above verse. I made witnessing an obligation and a duty that we must perform, whether we liked it or not. No doubt with that kind of an attitude it became to some a no more glamorous "chore" than washing dishes or taking out the garbage! I am happy that the Lord has opened my understanding to the true meaning of this verse.

The second "ye shall" can best be interpreted in the light of the first "ye shall." When people are genuinely baptized with the Holy Spirit, they shall receive power. It is the natural consequence of the experience. It is spontaneous.

Additionally, when people are genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit, they become witnesses--not because they are forced or assigned to--but because it is the natural consequence of the experience. God is Holy, God is a Spirit, and God is love. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are filled with a holy love. *"...the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us"* (Romans 5:5). This love will compel us to share Jesus with others!

It is a known fact that new converts win more people to Jesus Christ than "seasoned saints," people who have been serving the Lord for some time. What a shame! What has gone wrong? Have we lost our first love? As we have grown older in the Lord, have we forgotten the pit that the Lord Jesus Christ pulled us out of? Have we lost the freshness and the excitement of the Pentecostal experience? This is not the way it should be. We ought to love souls.

We need the Lord to give us that second touch, so Jesus more as we get to know Him better. Knowing Him more will result in us having a greater burden for that we will be soul-conscious. When that happens, the people around us will cease to be moving objects only. We will see them clearly on their journey towards hell, and we will surely want to do something about their spiritual condition! *ds*