

Steps to Christ

Bible Study Series



Rejoicing in the Lord!

15 - 16

(1) AS CHRISTIANS, TO WHOM ARE WE TO REPRESENT CHRIST'S GOODNESS, MERCY, AND LOVE?

Isaiah 12:4, 5

Related Texts: Isaiah 66:19; John 17:18; 1 Chronicles 16:8; Psalm 9:11; 96:3; 105:1; 107:22

The children of God are called to be representatives of Christ, showing forth the goodness and mercy of the Lord. As Jesus has revealed to us the true character of the Father, so we are to reveal Christ to a world that does not know His tender, pitying love.

(2) WHEN WE ACCEPT AND FOLLOW CHRIST, WHAT ROLE ARE WE TO FULFILL?

2 Corinthians 3:2, 3

Related Texts: 1 Peter 3:15; Acts 4:20; Romans 1:8, 16, 17; 1 Thessalonians 1:8

In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ's follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness and be won to love and serve Him.

(3) WHAT TWO CHARACTERISTICS SHOULD OUR LIVES REFLECT AS WE, IN CHRIST'S SERVICE, BEAR LIGHT TO THE WORLD?

1 Timothy 6:6

Related Texts: Philippians 4:11; Psalm 34:5; 4:3; Galatians 5:22, 23; 1 Timothy 2:2; 4:8; 6:11; Proverbs 19:23; 30:8; Ecclesiastes 4:6

Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service.

If we do represent Christ, we shall make His service appear attractive, as it really is. Christians who gather up gloom and sadness to their souls, and murmur and complain, are giving to others a false representation of God and the Christian life. They give the impression that God is not pleased to have His children happy, and in this they bear false witness against our heavenly Father.

(4) WHAT IS THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE THAT, IF FIXED WITHIN OUR MINDS, WILL PREVENT UNBELIEF, DESPONDENCY, AND ACCEPTANCE OF SATAN'S MISREPRESENTATIONS AGAINST GOD?

Psalm 125:1

Related Texts: Psalm 4:5; 64:10; 57:1; 40:4; 34:8; 141:8; Proverbs 29:25; 30:5; 3:5

Satan is exultant when he can lead the children of God into unbelief and despondency. He delights to see us mistrusting God, doubting His willingness and power to save us. He loves to have us feel that the Lord will do us harm by His providences. It is the work of Satan to represent the Lord as lacking in compassion and pity. He misstates the truth in regard to Him. He fills the imagination with false ideas concerning God; and instead of dwelling upon the truth in regard to our heavenly Father, we too often fix our minds upon the misrepresentations of Satan and dishonor God by distrusting Him and murmuring against Him. Satan ever seeks to make the religious life one of gloom. He desires it to appear toilsome and difficult; and when the Christian presents in his own life this view of religion, he is, through his unbelief, seconding the falsehood of Satan.

(5) LIKE PAUL, WHAT SHOULD BE OUR RESPONSE AS WE EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES ALONG THE PATH OF LIFE?

2 Corinthians 12:9, 10

Related Texts: 2 Corinthians 3:5; Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 43:2-5; Jeremiah 1:6-9; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 15:10

Many walking along the path of life, dwell upon their mistakes and failures and disappointments, and their hearts are filled with grief and discouragement. While I was in Europe, a sister who had been doing this, and who was in deep distress, wrote to me, asking for some word of encouragement. The night after I had read her letter I dreamed that I was in a garden, and one who seemed to be the owner of the garden was conducting me through its paths. I was gathering the flowers and enjoying their fragrance, when this sister, who had been walking by my side, called my attention to some unsightly briars that were impeding her way. There she was mourning and grieving. She was not walking in the pathway, following the guide, but was walking among the briars and thorns. “Oh,” she mourned, “is it not a pity that this beautiful garden is spoiled with thorns?” Then the guide said, “Let the thorns alone, for they will only wound you. Gather the roses, the lilies, and the pinks.”

Have there not been some bright spots in your experience? Have you not had some precious seasons when your heart throbbed with joy in response to the Spirit of God? When you look back into the chapters of your life experience do you not find some pleasant pages? Are not God’s promises, like the fragrant flowers, growing beside your path on every hand? Will you not let their beauty and sweetness fill your heart with joy?

The briars and thorns will only wound and grieve you; and if you gather only these things, and present them to others, are you not, besides slighting the goodness of God yourself, preventing those around you from walking in the path of life?

It is not wise to gather together all the unpleasant recollections of a past life,—its iniquities and disappointments,—to talk over them and mourn over them until we are overwhelmed with discouragement. A discouraged soul is filled with darkness, shutting out the light of God from his own soul and casting a shadow upon the pathway of others.

(6) WHEN AN UNWORTHY SINNER GRASPS THE PICTURE OF REDEMPTION, WHAT WILL BE HIS TESTIMONY?

Isaiah 12:4

Related Texts: Isaiah 12:5; Psalm 106:47, 48; 113:1-3; 117:1, 2; 105:1; 1 Chronicles 16:8-11

Thank God for the bright pictures which He has presented to us. Let us group together the blessed assurances of His love, that we may look upon them continually: The Son of God leaving His Father's throne, clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might rescue man from the power of Satan; His triumph in our behalf, opening heaven to men, revealing to human vision the presence chamber where the Deity unveils His glory; the fallen race uplifted from the pit of ruin into which sin had plunged it, and brought again into connection with the infinite God, and having endured the divine test through faith in our Redeemer, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and exalted to His throne—these are the pictures which God would have us contemplate.

(7) HOW DID GOD PROVE HIS LOVE FOR US BEYOND ANY DOUBT?

Romans 8:32

Related Texts: Romans 5:6-11; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 4:10

When we seem to doubt God's love and distrust His promises we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit. How would a mother feel if her children were constantly complaining of her, just as though she did not mean them well, when her whole life's effort had been to forward their interests and to give them comfort? Suppose they should doubt her love; it would break her heart. How would any parent feel to be thus treated by his children? And how can our heavenly Father regard us when we distrust His love, which has led Him to give His only-begotten Son that we might have life? The apostle writes, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" And yet how many, by their actions, if not in word, are saying, "The Lord does not mean this for me. Perhaps He loves others, but He does not love me."

(8) WHY SHOULD WE NOT DWELL ON THOUGHTS OF DOUBT OR SHARE DOUBT WITH OTHERS REGARDING ANY SPIRITUAL MATTER?

Romans 14:7, 13

1 Corinthians 8:9, 12

Related Texts: Luke 12:29; Matthew 12:36; Leviticus 19:14; Matthew 16:23; Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23; 1 Timothy 2:8

All this is harming your own soul; for every word of doubt you utter is inviting Satan's temptations; it is strengthening in you the tendency to doubt, and it is grieving from you the ministering angels. When Satan tempts you, breathe not a word of doubt or darkness. If you choose to open the door to his suggestions, your mind will be filled with distrust and rebellious questioning. If you talk out your feelings, every doubt you express not only reacts upon yourself, but it is a seed that will germinate and bear fruit in the life of others, and it may be impossible to counteract the influence of your words. You yourself may be able to recover from the season of temptation and from the snare of Satan, but others who have been swayed by your influence may not be able to escape from the unbelief you have suggested. How important that we speak only those things that will give spiritual strength and life!

(9) WHAT SHOULD OUR CONVERSATIONS CONTAIN THAT WILL REVEAL THE SALVATION OF GOD?

Psalm 50:23

Related Texts: Psalm 50:14; 86:12; 34:1; 104:33; 1 Peter 2:9

Angels are listening to hear what kind of report you are bearing to the world about your heavenly Master. Let your conversation be of Him who liveth to make intercession for you before the Father. When you take the hand of a friend, let praise to God be on your lips and in your heart. This will attract his thoughts to Jesus.

(10) WHAT COUNSEL DOES THE BIBLE GIVE US CONCERNING DOUBT AND DISCOURAGEMENT?

Philippians 2:14

Related Texts: Romans 12:8; 14:1; 2 Corinthians 12:19, 20; Ephesians 4:31; 1 Timothy 6:4-6

All have trials; griefs hard to bear, temptations hard to resist. Do not tell your troubles to your fellow mortals, but carry everything to God in prayer. Make it a rule never to utter one word of doubt or discouragement. You can do much to brighten the life of others and strengthen their efforts, by words of hope and holy cheer.

There is many a brave soul sorely pressed by temptation, almost ready to faint in the conflict with self and with the powers of evil. Do not discourage such a one in his hard struggle. Cheer him with brave, hopeful words that shall urge him on his way. Thus the light of Christ may shine from you. "None of us liveth to himself." Romans 14:7. By our unconscious influence others may be encouraged and strengthened, or they may be discouraged, and repelled from Christ and the truth.

(11) IN WHOSE PRESENCE IS THE FULLNESS OF JOY AND PLEASURE FOUND?

Psalms 16:8, 11

Related Texts: Acts 2:28; Jude 24; Psalm 36:8; 4:6, 7; 17:15; 21:6; 42:5

There are many who have an erroneous idea of the life and character of Christ. They think that He was devoid of warmth and sunniness, that He was stern, severe, and joyless. In many cases the whole religious experience is colored by these gloomy views.

It is often said that Jesus wept, but that He was never known to smile. Our Saviour was indeed a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, for He opened His heart to all the woes of men. But though His life was self-denying and shadowed with pain and care, His spirit was not crushed. His countenance did not wear an expression of grief and repining, but ever one of peaceful serenity. His heart was a wellspring of life, and wherever He went He carried rest and peace, joy and gladness.

Our Saviour was deeply serious and intensely in earnest, but never gloomy or morose. The life of those who imitate Him will be full of earnest purpose; they will have a deep sense of personal responsibility. Levity will be repressed; there will be no boisterous merriment, no rude jesting; but the religion of Jesus gives peace like a river. It does not quench the light of joy; it does not restrain cheerfulness nor cloud the sunny, smiling face. Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister; and when His love reigns in the heart, we shall follow His example.

Thank you God my Father for revealing your love to me beyond a shadow of doubt in the gift of your Son for my redemption. I choose to abide in Jesus that I may experience the fullness of Joy and pleasure that He desires to give to me.

Please Circle: **Yes** **Undecided**

I accept the honor of bearing the name “Christian” and choose to reveal to others the joy, peace, and happiness that comes from abiding in Him.

Please Circle: **Yes** **Undecided**

I choose to trust the Lord because I realize that trusting Him is my only source of protection from Satan’s lies and unbelief.

Please Circle: **Yes** **Undecided**

It is my goal to uplift and encourage those I am around so they will not drift into discouragement and unbelief.

Please Circle: **Yes** **Undecided**

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