



# Northside Proclaimer

*Proclaiming The Word Of The Lord*

1 Thessalonians 1:8

**Northside Church Of Christ Welcomes You!**

**September 27, 2015**

## **When a Person Learns Better, He Should Do Better**

*Bryan Garlock*

“Change is the end result of all true learning.” — Leo Buscaglia

James argued for change when he wrote, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing” (James 1:22-25).

Compare this to secular work. Companies spend millions of dollars annually to train and equip their employees to perform at their best. In addition to hands-on training, they provide guidebooks, tools, etc. to make the employee’s job easier, safer, and more efficient. When an employee learns how to do something better, his bosses expect him to perform better.

Does our heavenly Father not do the same for us? His powerful word is meant to guide, equip, and build us up in the faith! In fact when one obeys the gospel he is not only saved from his past sins, but begins a life of spiritual growth involving change. As a person learns better, and changes his behavior to match his new knowledge, he grows in the Lord. Thus his attitude, love, work ethic, principles, etc. will change as he learns better. Indeed he is growing, but more importantly he changes those things that cause him to be unholy so as to remain holy. On the flip side of that, what happens to one who doesn’t change? He isn’t growing!

One who hears the word of God and yet does not do what he hears is likened to a person who learns better, but does not do better. James says in verse 22 that this person deceives himself.

He continues, “If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless” (26). Obviously one who studies the book of James will learn he ought to bridle His tongue (chapter 3), but he contends that if one does not do so, meaning one who does not do what he learns, that person deceives his heart and his religion is worthless.

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## Announcements

- Remember the shut in's.
- Pray for the church and one another.
- Remember the spiritual sick among us.
- Call or email Bryan to add announcements, thanks.
- If you'd like to volunteer to help with Bible studies with our fair contacts, please see Bryan G.
- Mary Lou had surgery Thursday and is home now.
- Bill Hall is to have surgery at Christ Hospital Tuesday
- Norma Wilkin is at Christ Hospital in ICU.

### Chronological Bible Reading Plan

Sep 27 Neh 6-7

Sep 28 Neh 8-10

Sep 29 Neh 11-13, Ps 126

Sep 30 Mal 1-4

Oct 1 Luke 1, John 1:1-14

Oct 2 Matt 1, Luke 2:1-38

Oct 3 Matt 2, Luke 2:39-52

There are many points that can be made from this. Applications would range from learning not to use inappropriate language to learning not to lie, etc. If one was to learn that he is to spread the gospel as a Christian what will he do with such information? Dismiss it? Push it to the side for a later date? Ask someone to visit church and imagine that he's done his share? What if a Christian learns he has put secular and worldly activities before the Lord? Does he continue to push God aside blatantly disregarding the command to seek Him first and to put Him above all else? What about our time? Do we find ourselves doing what we want instead of what God wants? Can one honestly say he grows when he selfishly does for himself and not for the Lord? What if Scripture challenges our opinions on a topic? What if what we think is not what God thinks (see Isaiah 55.8-9)? Should we dismiss a command because we don't agree or we think it unnecessary? Obviously we could cite example after example! Surely we can do better as individuals!

Consider also our growth as a local church. Once a church has studied the principles of biblical giving does the church continue to give as they have always given or does the giving increase? What about our love? Does it increase and abound as we learn it ought to? What if a church that has heard countless times passages commanding the practice of New Testament discipline learns one is in open sin. Does the church overlook the issue (as they may have always done) or do they deal with such? Again, what if Scripture challenges our opinions on the matter? What if our opinion is we don't need church discipline or it isn't our job to fix people? What if God says it is? How will the church respond? Will they act as if God doesn't know what He is talking about? Will they make up their own ideas about what discipline should be or in some cases should not be? Additionally, God commands that each local church appoint elders. Is the church seeing to it that the men are studying and growing? If not, why not? What about our work? If a church finds there is more to do than just coming to the assembly and worshipping, do they step up to the plate? Do they get their hands dirty? Churches ought to do better as they learn better!

The Bible is replete with passages that teach us to grow (2 Peter 3.18; Col. 1.28; Eph. 4.13; Heb. 5.14, etc.). What is the point of gospel preaching each Lord's Day if we are not going to apply the lessons to our lives? What is the point of Bible classes and daily Bible study if we are not going to change when we learn better? Who are we kidding? Learning is of no use if there is no doing. Thus when we learn better we ought to do better. If not, we are simply deceiving ourselves. BG