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## Progress in the Blessed Life in Christ - For Everyone - Now

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1. **The blessed life in Christ as revealed in Scripture.**

Matt. 5:13-16, Ps. 23, Ps. 1:1-3 <Josh. 1:8-9>, John 4:14, John 7:38, Rom. 8:37-39, Eph. 5:8-9, Phil. 2:13-18, Heb. 13:5-8.

- Who is this for? It is for you, whoever you may be.
- Very likely you are “disqualifying” yourself for it because of human standards that have marked you, in your own mind, as “unblessable.”
- Take some time to put yourself in the picture. What would that be like?

2. **Where does the blessed life come from, humanly speaking?**

From your heart (will, the human spirit) – the center of your being and life.

Prov. 4:23, Mark 7:20-23. Your heart/will/spirit is **the executive center of your personality.**

3. **The “Great Commandment” and why it is “Great.”**

Mark 12:29-31 – Where the heart must be: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. And the second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Here Jesus indicates the parts of you that must come into alignment with God – loving Him and what he loves – if you are to walk in the abundance/obedience of the blessed life.

4. **The human “heart” must be renovated,**

| Our Starting Position        |
|------------------------------|
| Ignorance (of God and world) |
| Mistrust                     |
| Fear                         |
| Ungoverned Desire            |
| Anger                        |

| These Must Be Replaced By:                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Knowledge of God and His kingdom (the Gospel)                    |
| Prayer as a way of living: constant invocation and special times |
| Giving/Serving                                                   |
| Love-willing and acting for the good of God and Neighbor         |

5. **How this “renovation” is done:**

By coming to understand Jesus Christ and accepting him as your Teacher in living in the Kingdom of God. **Have you done this? This is the only way forward in the blessed life in Christ now.** **THIS** is what “Trusting Christ” is.

- First, learn his teaching about God: Where and who God is and what He is doing?
- Then learn from him how to do the things he said.
- And how to do everything I do with him and for him. (Col. 3:17)

6. **Discipleship to Jesus is a status we enter by decision. Luke 14:26-35**

“Seek **FIRST** the kingdom and its kind of rightness...” Matt. 6:33

**In** that status **spiritual formation in Christ occurs**: the process of shaping of all parts of our self to be like the parts of His self. This is “renovation of the heart,” which occurs interactively with all of the parts of your self under the direction of the heart and mind.

7. **Method in discipleship: removing and replacing**

**Finding and doing the things that remove** ignorance of God, mistrust, fear, ungoverned desire, and anger **from all parts of the self** and **replace them** with knowledge of God and His kingdom, prayer as a way of living, giving/serving as the meaning of our life, and Love ("God is love.") as the moving spirit in our whole life.

8. **Some Practices to be implemented in "finding and doing":**

| DISCIPLINE | DEFINITION                                                                                                         |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Solitude   | Being alone and doing nothing – why so important – <u>it takes us off our kingdom</u> . Putting His kingdom first. |
| Silence    | Learning not to rule our world with our mouth.                                                                     |
| Fasting    | Learning to be sweet and strong when we don't get what we want                                                     |
| Study      | Transforming our minds to align with God's                                                                         |
| Fellowship | Learning to love in God's way.                                                                                     |
| Confession | Leaving pretence behind.                                                                                           |

9. **Summary: We progressively enter the blessed life of obedience/abundance now**

by surrendering each part of our self, beginning from the will and the mind, to God through Jesus Christ, as his disciples. This is bit by bit, daily learning from Christ.

- Our **aim** is renovation of the heart, not the blessed life.
- The **result** is progression into the blessed life right where we are, living in the character and power of Jesus Christ our Master.

*"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children; and walk in love,  
just as Christ also loved us and gave himself up for us..."  
Ephesians. 5:1-2*