

A Teachable Spirit

"Integrity is the glue that holds our way of life together. We must constantly strive to keep our integrity intact. When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost."

(Billy Graham)

There is a quality of spirit deep within the heart that desires a much deeper Christian life. This quality is worth more than great riches, the rarest jewel, or even the greatest talent. It is the quality of a teachable spirit.

Mighty warriors who desire to go deeper are teachable. As we study the life of Abraham, we can plainly see why he was so blessed. More than anything else, he valued instruction and a willingness to keep the commandments of God. Such a desire is much more than just a willingness to listen. We become teachable when our desire to receive wisdom is greater than our desire for comfort.

Do we have a willingness to be instructed? Are we humble enough to receive wisdom from the Lord and from others? At times, we all become unteachable and refuse sound advice. The real truth is that during those times, we would prefer to change the rules rather than comply. However, that never brings us to a place of blessing; rather, it destroys our lives. Scripture says pride comes before a fall, and, in any case, it leaves us out on a limb, alone.

I can't help but think of Naaman who wanted to be healed from the leprosy that was destroying his flesh, yet he ran off in an angry rage when God's messenger told him to simply go wash seven times in the Jordan River. It was an awkward, seemingly absurd command that made no sense to his natural mind. Why should he dip his body in a dirty river when there were far superior rivers in his own land? However, the river wasn't really his problem. His pride wouldn't let him humble himself enough to obey and be healed. In the end, his leprosy was cured only when he listened to wisdom, changed his mind, humbled his heart, and was obedient to follow a simple but clear instruction from a godly and anointed man.

In the same way, we must realize that a deeper Christian life requires us to crucify the flesh, humble ourselves, and obey when our reasoning says otherwise. It requires active pursuit in seeking, hearkening to, and studying the Scriptures. As we humble ourselves, we are stripped of pride and our hearts become soft and teachable, yearning more for intimacy than for independence and our own agendas.

Becoming teachable is a process. Are we teachable? Are we learning? Do we have a burning desire to embrace character and integrity even if it hurts?

**"Now therefore, listen to me, my children,
for blessed are those who keep my ways." ([Proverbs 8:32](#))**

God blesses those who draw near to listen to the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit. Often we ignore His voice, His warnings, and even His vivid red flags because we refuse to listen. If we are not listening, we are not learning, and if we are not learning, we are not growing. The cycle never stops, and the blessing will not come until we stop what we're doing and begin to watch, wait, listen, and obey.

In Proverbs 8:34-35, God instructs us **to watch, wait, and search** for Him. Notice that these are all action verbs that we should practice every day. In fact, we should always be alert to things He wants to teach us. And more than just being aware, we should diligently seek wisdom and truth, for Scripture says that those who seek Him will find Him.

In Hosea 4:6, it says, **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you for being priest for me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."** Listening is serious business to God! Scripture warns that, if we reject God's teaching and ignore wisdom, He will bar us from becoming priests—representatives of His kingdom. Personally, I would rather not be passed over when He needs a useful vessel. In fact, if to live for me is Christ, I want nothing more than to be in the center of His will.

In Leviticus 26:23-24, it says, **"If after all of this punishment *you still do not listen to me*, but continue to defy me, then I will turn on you and punish you seven times harder than before."** (Today's English Version) The key phrase here is, "if you still do not listen to me."

Also notice Proverbs 8:32-36: **"Now therefore, *listen to me*, my children, for blessed are those who keep my ways. *Hear instruction* and be wise, and do not disdain it. Blessed is the man who *listens to me*, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord; but he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate me love death."**

Scripture emphasizes the importance of listening to God, even mentioning it three times in this short passage. In the same way, Ezekiel 3:7 refers to the people of Israel as

“hard, impudent, and stubborn.” And if, like Israel, we have developed a bad habit of not listening, this Scripture also applies directly to us. (See Galatians 6:16.)

A teacher who has invested much time in a particular student needs evidence that the student has truly learned from his wisdom—that the time spent was a good investment. In a spiritual sense, the proof comes when a student’s life is transformed into a life that glorifies God. Where he was once reckless and immature, he now displays maturity, self-control, and a teachable heart.

Do we really have a burning desire to be taught? Do we honor and respect wisdom from a **“multitude of counselors?”** (Proverbs 15:22) Are we diligently seeking God's best in our lives, refusing to compromise our integrity and character? Are we motivated to becoming wise and applying this wisdom to our lives? Are we paying close attention to our teachers and refusing to pass up opportunities to learn? Are we learning from our past mistakes, refusing to keep falling into the same traps? To fall into a pit is one thing, to stay in there is another.

If we find ourselves lacking the desire to learn from God and others, it is usually because we have lost our first love and need a fresh revelation of who He is and how much He loves us, along with a healthy dose of fear of the Lord. Having a healthy fear of God is key: **“Who is the man that fears the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way he chooses”** (Psalms 25:12). Listen, and learn from your past mistakes. Have a teachable spirit, and be that man or woman of God.

You have called me for such a time as this! Let it be, oh God, according to your Word. Give me ears to hear sound wisdom and courage to live an obedient life. Mighty warriors who desire to go deeper are teachable.

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Steve and his wife Diane founded "Refuge Ministries." Steve is a regular contributor to many prophetic publications, including the Elijah List, Spirit Fuel, and the Identity Network. His writings have been read worldwide by hundreds of thousands of people. He has also been interviewed by the Trinity Broadcasting Network and other TV programs. Steve's books, articles, and videos have touched countless lives around the world. The Porters reside near Rochester, NY.