

How to Live 5 of 12

Do What You Know

#0255

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1964

One of the greatest verses on how to live is found in the scriptures: John 13:17. Together:

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”
John 13:17.

This is successful living. What little word of two letters is repeated? Do you all see? How many “ifs”? Two “ifs,” what’s the first? If ye know. And what’s the second? If ye do.

What is it that is necessary in order for us to know? How do we get to the point of knowing? We study. How much study will fulfill the second “If”? How much does it take? We never reach the point. Is that right?

Now, this is one of the great difficulties with conventional education. Jesus summed it up when He spoke of the scribes and Pharisees. He said they say and do not (Matthew 23:3). They were greatly concerned with doctrine, with theory, with teaching, with precepts, with rules, with answers to theoretical questions. But He said, “You have missed the real point of doing.”

All together, let’s read it again:

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”
John 13:17.

We see the importance then of the second point. But now let’s look at the importance of the first point. What is necessary if we are to do it? We must know. And in order to know, we agreed we must what? Study. The purpose of studying is to know, and the purpose of knowing is to do.

Now turn to *Ministry of Healing*, page 448. See what words or expressions you find in this sentence that belong with this text, that are parallel to the text we have just read. What is parallel to know? Knowledge, that’s right. What is parallel to do? Utilized. What does utilized mean here? Use, put into action, put into use of some kind, do something about. And what is parallel or belongs along with the idea of studying to know? Imparted. Christ imparted and His disciples received. He taught and they listened, studied, learned. And as the result, they knew. And they would be happy if knowing they? Did it. But notice that:

“Christ imparted only that knowledge which could be utilized” *Ministry of Healing*, page 448.

Do you ever thirst for knowledge? What kind of knowledge? And for what purpose? Read on:

“His instruction of the people was confined to the needs of their own condition in practical life” *Ibid*.

Listen! Tell me! Could Jesus have taught the people of His generation how to reach the moon? If you read the proceeding paragraph you’ll agree, He could have. Why didn’t He do it? It wasn’t necessary.

“His instruction of the people was confined to the needs of their own condition in practical life” *Ibid*.

I hope there are some teachers here this afternoon. I hope every one of you will become a teacher. As teachers, settle it in your heart that you will teach nothing except that which has a useful purpose in the lives of those that you teach.

My! Think about how much we could cut out of the great libraries of this country. Think about how much we could eliminate from the curriculum of the various institutions of learning. Don’t teach anything unless the person who is learning it can do something about it that is helpful and useful.

Now another question: If we’re to teach only that which can be utilized, only that which is of value in practical life, what about our learning? What should we learn? Only that which can be put into practice. Think back over what you’ve learned the last 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years. Have you labored to learn something which has no practical value? We’re told we have much to unlearn as well as to learn.

It is very interesting, dear friends, really if it weren't so serious, it would be just plain laughable, to watch certain educators squirm when they get right at this point, begin to squirm and begin to bring up defenses for this book and that book, this subject and that subject and show that certainly, they have some use. Well, okay. I’m not going to chase anybody into a corner. We’re going together to broad fields, but the gate is narrow:

“...straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life...” Matthew 7:14.

But life, abundant life is broad and wonderful. But the way to get there is to study to know, and then to do.

Now look at your paragraph there and read it with me beginning with “Christ imparted.” All together:

“Christ imparted only that knowledge which could be utilized. His instruction of the people was confined to the needs of their own condition in practical life. The curiosity that led them to come to Him with prying questions, He did not gratify” *Ministry of Healing*, page 448.

Wait a minute! Didn't He answer all their questions? Tell me, do you sometimes worry because you can't answer all the questions people ask? Well, don't worry. The Lord never intended you and me to answer all the questions that are asked.

“The curiosity that led them to come to Him with prying questions, He did not gratify” *Ibid.*

But notice what He did when they asked that? He didn't just brush them off and say, “Forget it.” Watch. All together:

“All such questioning He made the occasion for solemn, earnest, vital appeals. To those who were so eager to pluck from the tree of knowledge, He offered the fruit of the tree of life. They found every avenue closed, except the way that leads to God. Every fountain was sealed, save the fountain of eternal life” *Ibid.*, pages 448–449.

What language! What a concept! Oh, folks, how rich we are. Even in our study of the Bible and in nature, it is easy for us to sink to the level of merely being curious. Now, Jesus let curious people come to Him. He let them ask questions. But He used that as an occasion for leading them from the tree of knowledge over to the what? The tree of life. I hope every one of us here will get so interested in that tree of life that we'll just eat of it every day.

Notice that next sentence. What was it that Jesus didn't encourage people to do? To go to what? The rabbinical schools of His day. Why not? They were continually quoting human authority. Aren't you glad that, that's all past and gone? Aren't you glad we don't have to worry about that anymore? Well, perhaps we still do need to watch that point.

Now, back to our text:

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”
John 13:17.

We've already noticed that in order to know, we must study. And the purpose of knowing is to do. Now, my next question and don't miss this: When should we do? What do you think about it? Sissy says as soon as we know we are supposed to do. Well, if you want to be happy, because it takes both to make you happy, right? Isn't that what it says?

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”
John 13:17.

And the purpose of knowing is to do. And we're to do that which we know. Do we agree now that the time to do is as soon as we know? And again, here we have something fundamentally different from conventional education. To many people, life is made up of two periods: A period in which they learn and then afterward a period in which they do. Correct? And so they spend 8 years, 12 years, 16 years, 20 years learning, learning, learning, looking forward to a time when they will put into practice that which they have learned.

In true education as surely as the purpose of learning is to do, so surely the doing follows quickly on the heels of the learning. In fact, dear friends, we have not really learned truth until it comes out into our muscles, and is expressed in word and action. This is real education.

We just noticed some things that Jesus avoided and some things that He did. This is speaking of His public ministry, particularly. I want you to notice how he, as we would say, got that way?

Turn to page 399 of *Ministry of Healing*, the first sentence in the paragraph there beginning in the middle of the page, a very short sentence. What does it say? He must have had unusual parents. Well, He did as a matter of fact.

“Jesus secured His education in the home. His mother was His first human teacher. From her lips, and from the scrolls of the prophets, He learned of heavenly things”
Ibid., page 399.

Now, what did He use to get this instruction from her lips? His ears. That's right. What did He use to get the instruction from the scrolls of the prophets? His eyes.

Turn to Proverbs 20:12. Notice these expressions. We'll pick one of them up again in a few moments. Together:

“The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them” Proverbs 20:12.

What's the ear for? To hear. What's the eye for? To see. Is it possible to have your eyes open and still not see? Is it possible to have your ears open and still not hear? You know somebody here got twice as much the last five minutes as somebody else did. That's right. You can get, nearly everybody here can get, twice as much the next five minutes as you got the last five minutes. It lies in focusing the energies of the mind on what we're looking at or what we're listening to. We need to zero in on the point.

“...He learned of heavenly things” *Ministry of Healing*, page 399.

From who? From His mother, and from where? The scrolls of the prophets.

“He lived in a peasant’s home...” *Ibid.*

What’s a peasant? A poor person. That’s right.

“He lived in a peasant’s home and faithfully and cheerfully acted His part in...”

Doing what?

“...bearing the household burdens” *Ibid.*

What do you suppose that some of that might be? Sweeping the floor, bringing wood, doing dishes, preparing the table, carrying water. For most of the people back there, the water that they used in the home had to be carried. So there was plenty to do that involved muscle. Then every day Jesus was not only learning, but what? Doing. He was not only using His eyes and His ears but His hands and feet.

“[He] faithfully and cheerfully acted His part in bearing the household burdens. He who had been the commander of heaven was a willing servant, a loving, obedient son. He learned a trade and with His own hands worked in the carpenter’s shop with Joseph” *Ibid.*

Now, what two places, at least are suggested here in which He worked? The home and the shop. You mean He worked in both? That’s what it says. He worked in both.

Now, dear class, don’t miss this next point. If you were in a situation where you had no opportunity to work in a home or in a shop, what use would it be for me to spend this time studying this point with you? Do you see? But tell me, do any of you have the opportunity to work in a home? Do you? Do you have the opportunity, notice the way that it is worded, to act your part in bearing the household burdens? Do you? Listen, if there’s one that doesn’t have that opportunity, let me know. I want to be sure the program is working. I want to be sure that you have that opportunity, that privilege.

I have lived long enough to have already learned this. Perhaps you’ve learned it young. I knew something about it young, but I can tell you this, every year that goes by I know this better. And I’m not just saying this because it might sound good here. I’m telling you this from the bottom of my heart. This verse that we’re studying this afternoon is literally true:

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”
John 13:17.

There's a happiness that comes in doing something to make the home run, not the baseball home run, to cause the home to run, to make it successful. There is a happiness that comes in that that nothing else in the world gives quite the same. There are times when I get busy with other things, committees, letters, counsels, meetings. But I just get hungry to do something like sweeping a porch or cutting some wood. And I get hungry enough to get my hunger satisfied.

Just yesterday there was a wide board, a five-ply that needed sawing to make something in the home. And it was being discussed what we might do and how fast the men could do it if there was an electric saw around. You know, I just got hungry to see that done by hand. And our neighbors let me have a saw. And just before dinner, I had a few minutes, and I got that six feet of five-ply sawed through by hand.

But the thing is folks; I got more out of it than the board did. The board got fixed up like it was supposed to, and as providence would have it, I had a little piece of sandpaper, and I could sand it off on the edge where it wouldn't splinter somebody, you know. But when I got through, when I sat down to my meal, I had a joy and a satisfaction that no amount, and I say it reverently, of Bible study could have given me. This is just as much a part of how to live as reading the scriptures.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them"
John 13:17.

All right, now let us go over the page:

"In the garb..." *Ministry of Healing*, page 399,

What does garb mean? Clothes. We would say in overalls.

"In the garb of a common laborer, He walked the streets of the little town, going to and returning from His humble work" *Ibid.*, pages 399–400.

You mean he worked in one place and then went home and worked in another? And how did he get from home to shop? Do any of you have that opportunity? Do you?

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John 13:17.

Now there's a time to ride. Jesus believed that. Did He ever ride? Yes, He rode the colt one day. And He probably had ridden before that in His life. But the usual picture we see of Jesus is what? Walking. He walked from home to work and in the evening when he was all tired He did what? Walked where? Home.

Now I want to give you a little sidelight on this. And this is just so wonderful; I had to bring the book along. It's in the little volume *Sons and Daughters of God*. Listen and see if it doesn't just thrill you:

“The childhood and youth of Christ were spent in humble circumstances under conditions that were favorable to the development of a sound constitution. His life was passed mostly in the open air. He drank of the pure streams of water, and ate the fruit of the garden. He passed up and down the steep mountain paths and through the streets of Nazareth as He went to and from His place of toil to His home” *Sons and Daughters of God*, page 135.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could live in a place like that? Wouldn't it? Where we could go up steep mountain paths getting from where we live to where we work and from where we work to where we live?

“He passed up and down the steep mountain paths and through the streets of Nazareth as He went to and from His place of toil and to His home” *Ibid*.

Now listen to the next:

“He enjoyed the very notes of the birds as they caroled forth their praise to their Creator” *Ibid*.

This is while He's going from home to work and work to home.

“He took delight in the beauty of the flowers that decked the fields. He noted with joy the glory of the heavens, the splendor of sun, moon, and stars, and looked upon the rising and setting sun with admiration. The book of nature was opened before Him, and He enjoyed its tender lessons. The everlasting hills, the olive groves were favorite places of resort where He went to commune with His Father. He was filled with divine wisdom. And through the study of nature and by meditation upon and communion with God, His spiritual powers were strengthened” *Ibid*.

Isn't that a wonderful picture, friends? Is it open to us?

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Now notice the program. Jesus was spending His time learning and doing. And the three great places noted in what we read today where He was learning and doing were in the home, in the shop, and in nature, coming and going. And in these three great facilities what a campus He had. What an educational opportunity!

What was He learning? My dear friends, He was learning the joy of service. And therefore, He did not look upon work as an interruption, a distraction, something to divert Him from His schooling. Oh, no. He looked upon what He learned as the

necessary preparation to do something to help His mother, His brother, His sisters, to help His fellow citizens in the home, in the shop, in the community.

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”
John 13:17.

Well, I'm just halfway through what I wanted to study today, but I think we have had enough. We'll close right here. Because, remember, the purpose of learning is, what? Doing. And the time to do is when? When we learn. So between now and our lesson tomorrow, we're not only going to meditate on what we've studied, we're going to what? Going to do it. And we're going to come back with a new appreciation of God's wonderful way of life.

Once more recite that verse with me:

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”
John 13:17.

Do you agree with me that that's a great verse on how to live? Oh, yes.

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