

LESSONS FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

Found In 2nd Kings 6

Seek to know the Lord. These were future prophets to be. They were in training. They were seeking God for wisdom, understanding, prophetic insight and spiritual power. Whatever the gift or ministry—seek God first and foremost, not the gift or the ministry. Relationship with the Lord means everything.

One day God gave one or more of them a revelation, an insight. The place where they lived was too small and cramped. They saw trees along the river and were willing to cut the lumber and build a larger dormitory and classroom. Now what should they do?

Lesson #1 is when you see a problem come up with a solution. Don't expect someone else to solve problems and do the work when it is in your power to work things out. They didn't ask the prophet to do the work. They volunteered. This is a wonderful lesson for associates, students, church members to learn.

Lesson #2 is consult with your pastor/leader. Always keep the pastoral relationship in mind. God ordains leadership. Students, associates, staff members, church members—you are subject to that pastoral leadership. When you get ideas—even God inspired ideas—consult with leadership and be patient for his/her approval regarding timing and process. When the plan is refined and settled upon, when the money is at hand, when you are equipped with the right tools—the leader will release you.

Lesson #3 is work together with your leader and friends. Every member of the body/the church is gifted in some way. Every gift is needed. We are workers together with God—and with His people (**1 Cor. 3:9**). All the students went to the work, and they asked the prophet to go with them.

Lesson #4 is acquire your own tools (gifts, training, experience) for ministry. One student didn't have an axe. He was eager to go and chop down trees. He wanted to do his part but he didn't have the proper equipment for the job. He borrowed an axe and rushed off to cut down trees. He may not have been an experienced axeman or he would have noticed the loose axe head. But he was willing, eager and rushed to the work with a borrowed tool and he got in big trouble. The axe head flew off and sank in the river. Now he didn't have a tool for the work—and no means to repay the lender. Two lessons: he wasn't properly equipped—and great lessons can be learned from great failures.

Lesson 4-B might be: you can't survive living in the shadow of another person's gifting and anointing. If you are going to do God's work you need God's tools for the job. You need your own spiritual gift and anointing. Lot survived for awhile living with Abraham, but when he went out on his own he got in serious trouble. When he left Abraham's coat tail he didn't have his own anointing. He drew near a wicked city; he wasn't a proper covering for his family, and his wife didn't obey the angel and turned into a pillar of salt; living in a mountain cave Lot got drunk and fathered his daughter's sons. Avoid alcohol; Lot didn't know what his daughters were doing with him.

Lesson #5 is: you need the right tool for the job. Think for a minute about equipping: you may have a gift, but it might not be the gift that is needed. What gifts or tools do we need for each project? Don't volunteer for some ministry until you are properly trained and equipped for that ministry. It is important to know your personal calling and gifts. Staff members need to be placed in the right positions which fit their gifting. Very important!

The conclusion is: the man who didn't have his own tool/gift for the job—**Lost** his head,
Flew off the handle,
Got into deep water and
Needed a miracle to recover the axe.

-----**I Can Declare!**-----

Because I am in Christ (**Col. 2:10**)...and Christ is in me (**Rom. 8:10; 1 Cor. 3:16 & 12:27; Col. 1:27**)
 I have the mind of Christ (**Phil. 2:5**)...and I have Christ-like authority and dominion (**Matt. 10:1, 28;**
Matt. 28:18,19; Acts 3:6; James 4:7;

Therefore: I can declare God's Benefits, Blessings, Promises & Provisions....for me & those I pray for!

Mighty Man in training—Live, learn and rejoice!

The Mayonnaise Jar and 2 Cups of Coffee

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They said "Yes!"

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up the space between the golf balls and the pebbles. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The **golf balls** are the important things—your faith in God, your family, your children, your church family, your health and your friends—and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car.

The sand is everything else—the small stuff. "If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

"Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Keep your faith strong in God and attend Sunday School and Church regularly. Play with your children. Visit your parents and grand parents. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse out to dinner. Play another 18 (**the golfballs**). There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal (**the pebbles**). Take care of the **golf balls** first—(the things that really matter)—then **the pebbles** (important but not essential). Set your priorities—**the rest is just sand.**"

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a parent, child or friend."

Was the professor right?

In the Spring of 1956 I was mission secretary for a national radio ministry. I had been married six years and had two young children. I bought an old house that needed fixing up. A friend was helping me and the house was jacked up for a new foundation. I was asked to go on an urgent trip to Nigeria and settle some problems—but how could I leave my family in the rickety house? While in prayer the Lord prompted me to open my Bible and the first verse I saw (**Romans 16:20**) said: "*The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly*". I was on a plane six days later, and a three month trip lasted three years. How did my family fare without a husband and father—and with a house unfit for Oregon weather? **First**—I paid attention to the call of God (**the golf balls**). **Next**—when I had to remain in Nigeria longer than three months, a co-worker at the office helped my family move into an apartment. When the decision was made to send my family to Nigeria he kept in touch with my wife while traveling and the ministry arranged and paid for the trip. And co-workers helped sell our rickety house for double the purchase price (**the pebbles**). **Third**—we experienced how God can unexpectedly change our focus; and He ended the confusion caused by Satan (**Rom. 16:20**) and I was launched on a fifty year career of Christian service—with multiple ministry trips in the U.S. and abroad (**the sand**). Our lives have been full—and there has been ample time for **the coffee** sessions . The professor was right! If we put God first in our lives, everything else will fall in place.

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