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Recap

- This course is about responding to the Lord's call to grow.
- God's grace is not just for salvation!
- We're also called to grow in the knowledge of Jesus.

About that Swiss cheese illustration...

Many believers have substance to their lives – but noticeable holes also. We end up being like Swiss cheese. The holes in Swiss cheese are due to microscopic imperfections around which gas can collect. In the same way, the “holes” in our Christian experience are often due to imperfections and things we won't confront.

Being Teachable

One of the things that hinders our growth and keeps us from being “less solid” as Christians is **not being teachable**: being unwilling to learn or receive instruction.

- Failure to be teachable means we can no longer receive what God is saying.
- We become inflexible and stubborn.

God wants us to be teachable!

After all, none of us is sufficient on our own.

1. God wants us to be teachable when it comes to doctrines.

God's Word doesn't change, yet we can grow in our **understanding** of His Word.

Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. (Acts 18:24-28).

Apollos was teachable even though he already had many fine qualities. And his ministry continued to grow – perhaps precisely because he **was** teachable.

2. God wants us to be teachable when it comes to religious practices.

We may think that the things we're doing are honoring to God, but what happens if what we're doing is contrary to the Bible? How will we react?

3. Obviously, we need to be teachable in regard to our moral behavior.

We can easily imagine a person doing something that God forbids, and hopefully we are receptive to correction when that person... is us!

4. We need flexibility in how we relate to others.

God wants to break us of stereotyping people and train us not to judge quickly.

Not being teachable comes from pride.

Being inflexible, stubborn, and unteachable is a species of pride.

“Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day” (Psalms 25:4-5).

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29). Our personality doesn’t give us an excuse, but we tell ourselves that it does. Are we really wearing His yoke? Committing to be a disciple means that we’ve committed to be teachable: flexible and ready to listen to what the Master is saying.

God’s people despised instruction that was said to be “little upon little, line upon line” (see Isaiah 28). This is how we teach little children, but our pride as adults gets in our way. We need to receive the Kingdom of God like a child.

We run the risk of become opinionated and setting ourselves up as teachers before we are ready. “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment” (James 3:1).

How does God teach us?

1. Through His Word.

Being teachable means I’m willing to apply His Word to my life. I’m not in charge of my own growth as a believer, so I stay in His Word!

“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free’” (John 8:31-32).

The Bible was given not just for our knowledge of doctrine but for the development of our character, so God can “adjust” us where needed: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for **doctrine**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction in righteousness**, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

2. Through other people.

This may require more humility. (It may be harder for us to receive from people!)

Do we welcome being rebuked? This requires a humility that most of us don’t possess.

“Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men who work iniquity; and do not let me eat of their delicacies. Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness. And let him rebuke me; it shall be as excellent oil; let my head not refuse it” (Psalms 141:3-5a).

The kind of mentoring we tend to seek is the mentoring that improves our skills or opens us up to bigger opportunities. We don’t necessarily welcome the kind of mentoring that says, “Here’s where I think you can do better.”

God gives us spiritual leaders to help us grow to become ***more like Christ***, and not just to give us knowledge or skills:

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ... (Ephesians 4:11-15)

3. Through God’s own “personalized” training.

We are taught by our life experiences: things that God allows to come into our lives.

“Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness” (Psalms 143:10). If we have issues in our character, God will use circumstances to speak to us, and hopefully we will heed what He’s trying to say to us.

It’s been said that God doesn’t give us a social promotion like they do in the schools! And **everybody** has to learn this way.

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:7-11)

Even Jesus had to endure this kind of training: “...though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8).

How do we become teachable?

1. Be humble!

The Bible tells us in several different places that “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5b).

- We don't know everything and we need one another.
- Your expertise doesn't carry over into other realms of life.
- Ask God to make you teachable.
- Commit to follow His Word and His ways: "Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name" (Psalms 86:11).

2. Seek wisdom.

Always be asking for wisdom. Always be praying for wisdom. View wisdom as a prize to be obtained!

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she will promote you; she will bring you honor, when you embrace her. She will place on your head an ornament of grace; a crown of glory she will deliver to you" (Proverbs 4:7-9).

3. Embrace correction, welcome it.

Can we listen to correction or criticism instead of immediately dismissing it?

Let's learn to drop our pushback: our "Yeah, but..."

4. Slow down and examine what God or people are saying to you.

Is there any truth in the suggestions or criticisms that you're receiving? Is there something in there that you can bring to the Lord in prayer?

Paul complimented the Bereans because they searched the Scriptures when Paul brought them something they hadn't heard before:

"Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men" (Acts 17:10-12).

Everybody's story sounds good until their neighbor gets up to cross-examine them (see Proverbs 18:17). Don't be defensive, but slow down and examine things.

5. Have a love for the truth.

People will be deceived and ultimately judged because they don't have a love for the truth (see 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). A love for the truth will help us to stay teachable, especially in the last days.

Homework Reading

Read Proverbs chapter 4, once a day. If you have time, read it twice: once in the morning and once in the evening.
